

VERSES

G. H. T.



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VERSES:

MOSTLY WRITTEN IN INDIA.

BY

G. H. T.

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1878.

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PROLOGUE.

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1878

I STRING together verses of my youth,
And some of later days, because—ah well !
I wonder if I know the whole plain truth,
And if I know it whether I can tell.

Is it because I feel they should not lie
Forgotten, honoured on no single shelf ?
The world can well afford to let them die ;
Do I then publish all to please myself,

Thro' 'vanity of song'? Not all, I think.
Relics there are of hours we would embalm—
Tho' only one may see, as thro' a chink,
Where here was tempest, there were peace
and calm.

Companions of memory there are
Whom we enshrine in silence : winds have
blown
Others abroad, beneath a different star
Born, unto some we fain would make them
known :

To some who prize. Soft voices, which have
said

Print, shall I blame you for these leaves
because

A page or two once idly heard or read
Moved for the moment a kind heart's
applause ?

Nay, friends, whate'er the slender issue be,
Or smile or scoff, this venture it is mine—
Who cast one shell more into that great sea
Of verse that lacks the poet's breath divine.

G. H. T.

April, 1878.

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PERSEPHONE IN HADES.

Persephone, or Proserpine, the goddess of flowers, who loved the gardens of Enna, was snatched away from earth by Orcus, to be his queen in the lower regions. Her loved companion, maid Cyane, attempting to arrest her capture, was suddenly transformed into a fountain by the all-powerful robber.

AH, once the life-blood curdled in this heart
Roved with a full-toned tide that drew delight
From all Earth's meadows, when my life's glad part
Took joy from Enna ! Clouds that overwhelm,
Darkening all colour to my changèd sight,
Passed not before me. Oh, in this black night
Holding a hateful queenship, Orcus' bride,—
Away from flowers, stone-hearted, stony-eyed—
What pleasure to me in this loathsome realm ?

Me mindful of deep cypress shades, the same
Whereunder I was wont to watch the wealth
Of Earth's glad waters, whose swift tender flow
Is in my ears : and I remember thee,
My Cyane, my own, who loved me so,
And loving bore *his* vengeance when he came
To snatch me,—thou, dost thou remember me ?
Have not men linked with thine my name,

Persephone ?

Persephone, whom thou shalt never see
Mirrored at morning in thy glassy deep,
And looking laughing ! Weep, my Cyane, weep :
Thy song was ever sad, thou hadst no glee ;
Oh, if thou knewst my woe—
Nay, laugh, my Fountain, thou—how shouldst thou
know ?

Tearless I keep my life—that is not life.
For took he not my tears when he did take
Me from the earth which all my joys contained ?
I, who was once so ruddy-veined,
And filled with maidenness that erst would break
In happy blushes, as the thought of wife
And mother thrilled me, when the Boy with wings,
Dallying with golden pauses of my life,
Of love mid flowers, and youths, and raptures spake !
Woe, woe that I should reap,
Instead of blisses, harvest of dry sighs
That wither all—but memory of things !
Tearless I hold mine eyes, that are not eyes,
Because they will not weep.

Ah me ! my big tears all are in my speech ;
How should my eyes o'erflow ? The blessed rain
Is wedded to the sunshine ; both have grace
From alternation ; each on each
Dependent for the pleasaunce they contain.

Because I have no sun, and the star-spheres
 Speak not to these sad eyes that find no place
 Cushioned with colour where they may have rest,
 Therefore a bride, in blush of bridal years,
 I have not the bride's dower—I have no tears.

O Earth! O Mother! nought but aching sight,
 Blackness of darkness, pain of endless night.

II.

After much prayer and lamentation from her mother and kindred, Zeus
 is at length persuaded to interfere. He decrees that Persephone
 shall be restored to earth for six months of every year.

Mother, I am not wholly left unloved.
 Slowly this darkness wavers. I who deemed
 Its still black wall against the front of day
 Indissoluble thickness, see e'en now
 The dim lights moving and the darkness moved.
 Yea, for a keen-edged Hope which lately gleamed
 Leads on a kindred army, whose array
 Hurled in bright lances on this gloom of fear
 Makes grey my night. O Hopes, do battle well!
 Brave Hopes, ply swift your lightnings!

Are they mocks

Or cheers that gather?

Nearer, let me hear.

Nearer. . . . I die with doubt. . . .

Joy, for the darkness—yea, the darkness rocks.

Fierce joy, that like a sun
Dazzles all apprehension, darting pain.
I feel the old light kindle in these eyes
Like fire from stone : far memories
Suddenly near, and thro' mine inmost brain
Clash all their ringing cymbals, that—like one
Who standing by a cataract hears and yet
Not hears, but only knows he stands
Perceiving not in a great dome of sound—
I have receivèd this my tale of joy.
Joy that no sense can bound :
Joy, a loud storm of joy
Unbreaking, gathered like a pile
Of thunder when the low long waves
Bow all their flashing crests and slope their backs
That sweat with fury : let me pray for rain,
Rain of swift tears. . . .

How should I know my gain,
Convinced of rapture only by its pain ?

Nay, but one teardrop : all the flowers have dews
To gem their portals ; mockery that a queen
Should have no jewels, not one sparkling tear !
I am not queen, I am Persephone,
Who roved in Enna with the happy Hours !
Am I not she ? Yea, for e'en now I hear
The torrent rushing : all my heart is loosed
And near to flowing : Oh, my prayer returns
Laden with dewdrops of my well-loved Flowers !

Swift, for the loud sea murniurs in my ears :
Swift, for the whirlpool rages in my brain :
Swift, swift, take from my joy its pain,
Thou flood of tears !
Mother.
O Zeus, I thank thee for the blessed rain.

To-morrow I shall see my Flowers.
Safe and no dream I hold it that brave hope,
The Thunderer's promise—‘ Half the year to thee
To watch on earth the roll of rosy Hours.’
Shall I not watch them ? now on grassy slope
Lying, with eyes on some far summer storm
Cooling the meadows ; lying dreamily,
Hand pillowing cheek—soft hand, warm cheek (Ah me !
Can this cold cheek grow warm ?)—
Now joying in the noon that hums
To slumber : ever, Cyane,
Tho' grieving, taking mournful pleasure to behold
Thee drest in diamonds when the Sun-God comes
To kiss thee. O my fountain fair,
Live knowing that Persephone aye pleads
For thee and her. Praying, perchance her prayer
Shall wrest from the great Zeus thy former mould
Of sweet humanity, and thee a maid
Again in due. Would I might strike
Thy waters into bead drops ; make thy beads
A cincture for that neck and shapely zone

And round white arms which I remember thine !
But now my joy is mine—
 Mine, wholly mine ; for over-wrought
By a long agony I can no more
 But count the hours ;
I am contained in one o'erwhelming thought :
 To-morrow I shall see my Flowers.



HERO'S LAMENT.

The reader will observe that in the following lines Hero is represented as looking out on a mournful starless life after Leander's death, instead of contemplating the suicide which would drown her grief in the grave of her lover.

BEFORE me yesterday he stood,—
 Now he is dead, not here; and a cold blue wave.⁵
 Mars my beloved's manly front—
 In the pitiless Hellespont
 Wasting that beauty which should have charmed
 away my maidenhood.
 And never Fate was by to save
 The star-like, beautifully brave!

Oh, many times I said—
 Making my words a very earnest prayer,
 For fear with love did hold an anxious strife—
 "Tempt not those treacherous waters, dearest life!"
 But he would only laugh,
 And dally with my beautiful long hair:
 Ah! what if it be beautiful, when he
 Who called it so lies in the deep dark sea!

My sorrow will not flow
 In tears, to cool these burning, dry-orbed eyes :
 Woe that my life should be despoiled of charms !
 No more of roaming thro' the shadowed dell,
 Nor any sauntering by the pleasant lake
 Where we two watched, when the red sun-god fell,
 The fireflies in the brake ;
 And twining hearts and arms
 Linked every thought likewise.
 Leander, weeping will not wake thee now,
 The cold Fates smile when mortals grieve.
 O stern-browed Sisters, O hard-hearted ones
 Who this dark web of Destiny did weave,
 Let that same windy surge
 Sweep over me, and cool this fevered brow !
 I hate you, for my heart is one large flame.
 Because I cannot weep, . . . Oh, I will fling
 A wild scream-laughter for Leander's dirge !
 . . . And live my life,
 Mocking and murmuring.

* * * * *

My life . . . that never dawned outright,
 But lost its one red ray of light,
 And swooned into a starless night.



THE PYRAMIDS OF GHIZEH.*

THREE giant heaps, dark in the twilight shade
 And clothed with ancient memories, I saw,—
 Round whom a veil of mist and centuries made
 A garment of great awe.

They stand in a dry plain, where there is nought
 To mind them of their youth, save the still moon
 And a large river, with whose rushing thought
 Nightly they hold commune.

For the wide flood and the great heaps have seen
 Strange things together,—dynasties depart ;
 And Egypt in her day of grandeur green
 With many a laurelled art ;

When silken argosies with prosperous sail
 Gladdened the foam about her harbour bars ;
 When wondrous men could read the wondrous tale
 Of the mysterious stars.

* It will be observed that these lines, the result of a visit to the Pyramids in 1858, contemplate those wonderful creations in one aspect only—viz., as monuments of vanity built over sepulchral vaults. They do not profess to be learned in the lore of modern Egyptology.

Together as the ages run they mind
 Of the old Ptolemies and their emprise—
And of the round-armed Woman making blind
 All men by dazzling eyes ;

Who passed undaunted, suckling the quick death
 That rioted upon her shapely breast,—
Say, Giant Heaps, if Cæsar's heel beneath
 You quivered in unrest ?

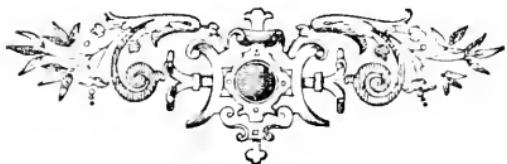
Nay, what is rest if you should know unrest ?
 And what is change of empire to the pile
That greets the thunder with unmovèd crest,
 And frowns when moonbeams smile ?

Yet, mountains of high tyranny and stone,
 What Pharaoh now remembers you with pride ?
Doth this remain sole boast of Cheops' throne—
 To entomb him thousands died ?

The living died to sepulchre the dead,
 Whose souls e'en in you could not fold their wings !
O, you were cruel labours, big with dread
 And vanity of kings !

Ashes to ashes, all things fade but these.
 They stand perchance to publish forth the crime
Of their creation, charged with memories
 Throughout all time—

Solemn and sad. Next, not in twilight shade
But in broad day those giant heaps I saw:
And still around the veil of centuries made
A garment of great awe.



COUSIN ANNIE.

I.

To me a boy my father gave a plot
Of garden ground, which I did tend so well,
Weeding and watering with a thrifty care,
That in the summer, lo ! a blush of flowers.

And I remember how one summer-time
There came to us for holidays from school
My cousin Annie. Orphan child she was,
And the few years that her young life had seen
Had brought some joys, but taken more away.
Her first sweet birthday gave a mournful gloom ;
For when my cousin, with blue baby eyes,
Looked in large wonder on the sunlight round,
Her mother saw the Day-star in the heavens.
And only she remained to heal the wound
In a dear father's side : who, for her sake
Living, and smiling sometimes, sorrowful,
Nine years did bear his grief within his heart—
Then both were buried in that wife's calm grave.

And Annie had a guardian : one of those
Stern thick-browed men who have no eyes for aught
That shows not in the mirror of the world.
As Tommy Smart, my college friend, did say,
' He was so full of all unpleasantness,
You could have sworn his sister was a gem.
Sweet women mostly have their brothers bears.'
My mother was his sister ; him we called
Our Bluebeard uncle. Well, when Annie came,
Wearing a girlhood shining with a dower
Of sparkling graces, ah ! I loved her straight
Because of that sweet face and kindly look—
Altho' my mother laughed, and said, ' Because
Your cousin's two years older than yourself.'

The summer loved dear Annie ; for the flowers
Came out to greet her with their thousand smiles :
And every morning from the garden plot
I took choice lilies, tying nosegays sweet
With pink and pansy, mignonette and rose.
And she would wear them in her breast, and I—
Would wish the tourney days were come again !
Oh ! all my dreams were full of prancing steeds,
Gay lists, and tents with curtains blazoned fair,
All gold-embroidered, belted by glad crowds
That shouted triumph as a knight rode in
Astride a charger white as maiden snow,
With eyes like rubies flashing fiery stars.
A steed, men whispered, not another knight

Nor living man in Christendom could ride.
There came a sound of trumpets, a great hush,
A shock of levelled lances : half a score
Died deaths of valour—gallants who had lived
But for the might of *one* strange matchless arm.
Again the trumpets : heralds loud proclaimed,
“Sir knight, thou art the victor of the day ;
Stand forth, look round, and choose you Beauty’s
Queen.”

He of the fierce white charger held aloft
Upon his lance a wreath of flowers, and bowed,
And cantered gaily round that fluttering ring,
And threw it lightly at his lady’s feet.
By Hercules ! that knight—’twas I myself !
And gentle Annie—she was Beauty’s Queen.
Ah, well ! I was but fourteen, and I dreamed.

Once more ’twas June : our cousin came again
Before I went to college ; flowers as erst
Were blooming fair, but Annie more than they.
Alas ! I had grown shy ; I who was wont
To make her blush with boyish compliment,
Now seldom spoke or walked with her alone ;
Could scarcely see her but my face would flush,
Could never touch her hand without a thrill.
And so at times I would conceal deep things
In hidden proverbs ; once had said a bush
Of summer roses circled by an edge
Of close-set box was like my cousin girt

By the dark guardianship of Bluebeard's brows—
 When she : “ Fie, fie ! O cousin ! sir, for shame !
 Your uncle is a good and thoughtful man.”
 And I, half-petulantly : “ Yes, I know,
 A very Moses ! meek and mild as—wolves,
 Who snatch poor lambs from miseries of cold,
 From knives and shambles—kind preservers they ! ”

Then, with a sudden burst of cousinship,
 “ O moss rose, would you had a few sharp thorns
 To hold resolve against a despot pride !
 I fear me lest some common fool should pluck
 And wear you yielding to a guardian's will.”

The months went by ; my college life was closed :
 I carried home the triumph of a *First*,
 And as I read delight in those dear eyes,
 Then—love's avowal could not be contained.
 And Annie—well, we looked thro' time, and saw
 A bright horizon rimmed with happy fears.

II.

At Evesham, in a grand old hall he lived,
 That hard-eyed guardian ; all the place was full
 Of varied beauty, from the shaded walks
 And matchless gardens to the antique rooms.
 Here lovely fairies sauntered morn and eve,
 Diversely clad,—these with a sober mien,

The Druidesses of enchanted land,
In rocky grottoes lived, and looked severe ;
But those, light flutterers, ran thro' all the lawns,
Climbing high terraces, and sliding down
In fragrant showers, laughed in beds of bloom ;
While everywhere a troop of Cupids raced,
You might have seen them with your fancy's eye
Dancing in myrtles, or when flushed with toil,
Sitting on sprays and in the cups of flowers,
All clapping hands, and calling ' Beautiful.'
There sister Graces rung the chimes of Art.
Within the carved rooms, richly wainscoted,
Were gathered glorious sculptures, and the lore
Of learnèd libraries exceeding rare :
A gallery of pictures, too, warm breaths
Of life on canvas—there the eye shall see
A score of paintings, each a mine of thought,
And opening views of poetry and God.
All rapt I saw them, loitering in that hall
Of Evesham, whither I had lately come.
'Twas there I learnt a cloud had crossed my life—
How that a baronet, with acres wide
Of sunny park, holding a rich rent-roll
Longer than his proud pedigree, had dared
To stand between me and my early love.
Thus he, the hard man, jovial o'er his wine :
" A splendid match—we'll have the wedding, sir,
Next month ; and when the pretty bird has flown,
I will do something for you in the world.

A splendid match ;" and so he rubbed his hands.
 And to me asking delicately if
 He thought the man were worthy of his ward,
 "Why, yes," he said ; "'tis true that time ago
 I used to say he was a fop, a fool,
 A handsome man who had more coats than brains,
 Or some such words,—but let them pass ; I erred."

Not so : the magic wand had waved, and wrought
 A marvel ; dense stupidity had grown
 To great good-nature ; the Boetian mind
 Had cleft its vapours, soaring Attic-born.
 A Liliputian wonder, as the stream
 Of the world's mind runs. Well, well, he asked me
 next

If I would speak to Annie, 'for a whim,
 A foolish whim, had seized her, that to wed
 The man she loved not was a hateful thing.'
 "All women have their fancies, and she hers."
 Saying, "I take it, if that famous jade,
 That Grecian Helen, had been tamed aright,
 No broil had been to nations, and a minx
 Would not have led them such a pretty dance.
 The ancients give us warnings—ha ! you see
 Old men can rub up classics when they will."

"Your classics are an honour, sir," I said ;
 "And yet perchance this Helen, this same jade
 Who led the people such a pretty dance,
 Was forced to marriage foreign to her will--

Hence broils and bloodshed. There was one, sir, too,
The classics talk of,—a great man, forsooth,
Who almost tamed the universal world,
And loved to place his foot on others' necks.
And yet 'twould seem that lesser stars sometimes
Obscure great lights ; for him another foiled.
But you who know the classics know full well
How General Cæsar planned—how he was baulked.
A Brutus——” “Hold ! enough,” he cried ; “ you prose,
Young sir,”—then, with a muttered deep aside,
“ Confound your classics and you college imps !”

The cousin Annie whom I loved became
My own dear wife ; and she remembers well
With a slight trembling—for her soft heart warmed
E'en to that guardian—how there came a time,
An anxious day that was her bridal morn.
But Bluebeard said I prosed, or I could tell
How, with a triumph swimming in my eyes,
I bearded that fierce uncle in his den,
And holding out a little paper slip,
The sweet certificate of wedded hands,
Spoke with good courage, “ Sir, she is my wife.”
And—but 'twere well to pass o'er angry words,
Or I had pictured how in Titan rage
He took and wound me all about within
A volume of big oaths, and whirled me round
His fury's circle, like that chief of old
Who dragged his foeman round the walls of Troy.

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS.

O COUNTRYMEN, all nations have bred their brave
and great ;
God gives the world its warriors and its rulers of the
State ;
An' ye say that Swedes be bravest—say on, a patriot's
boast—
All men are brave, my comrades, though some more
brave than most.

Methinks our *one* was bravest, and foremost chief of
fame ;
Hear it, O men of Sweden ! he made your nation's
name ;
And his own he left an heirloom to valour and to
right,
A star to honour's councils, a magnet to her
might :
And the cause he fought for, blazon it upon your
country's arms—
'Tis a sun that radiates heroes, wide scattering war's
alarms ;

'Tis the spell that sowed endurance in your ancestors
of old ;
'Tis a grace that giveth guerdon more valuable than
gold ;
'Twas the battle-cry of him who led your fathers nobly
forth :
Shout 'Freedom !' men of Sweden—shout for the
Lion of the North !

Ere English Marlbrook tamed the West, and stemmed
unequal power,
Ere Eugene's deeds of chivalry burst into glorious
flower,
In the Rhineland when the Austrian bowed freedom
'neath his yoke,
When the League was fiercely rampant, our king their
armies broke.
A stranger in that Rhineland, yet the brother of each
man
Whose pulses leapt for liberty, whose veins with
freedom ran,
For stranger hearths and homes he warred—but nay,
he fought for more,
For the tides of tyranny unchecked surge on to many
a shore ;
And standing there to hold them, our king his flag
unfurled
For the universal brotherhood throughout the mighty
world.

For the hearths of every nation did he lead our fathers
forth :

Shout freedom, men of Sweden, shout for the Lion of
the North !

What tho' the foeman's legions held the captains of
the time,

The warrior bigot Tilly, with the fiery Pappenheim ;
What tho' that wondrous presence moved which erst
was victory's sign,

Proclaim it with glad shoutings—he conquered Wal-
lenstein !

Oh, the League had famous men-at-arms, but none to
match our king,—

God's mercy ! 'tis a glorious art, though war's a fear-
ful thing.

Oh, the League had victories enow, but their triumph
was their bane ;

Their cruel havoc gave our side more living foes than
slain,

For the cry of indignation that rang through heaven's
wide dome

Sent thousands to our standards, who else had stayed
at home.

Ye have heard of bloody Magdeburg, of the execrable
day

When the Austrian with his bloodhounds made mas-
sacre of fray,

When perished men and women, and helpless babes
at breast,
And hearts found mercy only when laid to lasting
rest ;
When the fanatic grim demon smiled, and rest of pity
stood
To see the bright Elbe crimson with a tide of human
blood—
To see e'en League-men's hearts grow sick, and
League-men's eyes grow dim,
O'er those mangled forty thousand dead, that shamed
mankind and him !
Ay, Count of Tilly, though the grave should hide thy
martial fame,
Full many an eye shall kindle at the red spot on thy
name ;
Mankind whom thou hast shamed stern-browed thy
memory scan,
Perforce shall write thee warrior, but blush to own
thee man !
A curse upon all Devil's wiles that truth false sem-
blance lend,
And sanctify unholy means by whispers of pure end ;
A curse upon all bigot creeds that bid not bloodshed
cease :
Was ever baptism of blood fit messenger of peace ?
Not so our *own* : at onset like a lion from his lair,
But when he won surrender, Gustavus knew to spare ;

And young and old, pale women and tender children
kneeled
To see the smile of mercy that would have all wounds
healed,
To hear a high-souled victor cry, red-handed from the
fight,
“ ‘Tis God hath given us triu ph : be ours to use it
right.”
“ We war for freedom, brothers ; good cause should
ne’er be soiled
With blood of comely matron whose home the sword
hath spoiled ;
Let the maiden weep in silence, and wail the curse of
war,
As many a one, God knoweth, doth weep by that
dear shore
Where the waves kiss kindly, crisping o’er the yellow
shining sand :
Remember maids in Sweden—Swedes, lift no mur-
derer’s hand.”

Thus speak war’s truest heroes ; they love not martial
might
To change its glow for glory to thirst of wolfish spite.
Thus spake our own Gustavus when he led our fathers
forth :
Shout freedom, men of Sweden, shout for the Lion
of the North !

Ah! Swedes and brothers, well ye know he died in
early prime;

Our sun went down in glory, alas! before its time :
He fell, but won, at Lutzen (O mournful field of
fame!)—

Yet as that death we think of, who would not die the
same?

How much he wrought and toiled for; the deeds he
did to save

From priests and cruel tyrants the truth our dear
Lord gave;

How abroad he freed the captive, how at home he
ruled in peace,

And bade within his borders all righteousness in-
crease;

How the Popedom raged against him: these things
we love to tell,

These things are known to story—be ours to mind
them well,

And to sing his matchless prowess who led our fathers
forth :

Shout freedom, men of Sweden, shout for the Lion of
the North!



ALONE.

I.

IN a land where a flashing of streams
 Made silver threads in the plain,
 The brooklets ran laughingly by,
 On their way to the far-off main :
 And morning and noon and at night
 They sang with a joyful strain.

II.

A league away from that plain,
 And a silver thread glistened alone ;
 And a music of sadness seemed
 To dwell in that rivulet's tone.
 " Ah me ! all alone I go,"
 Said he, as he went with a moan.

III.

At first with a gentle plaint,
 Singing all the songs that he knew ;
 But ever as sense of a lone
 And a passionless exile grew,
 The rivulet murmured, " My stream it is slow,
 My waves they are sudden and few.

IV.

“I have scarcely a pebble to kiss,
 Or to dimple around with my foam ;
 Who is it would think me a child
 That was nursed in a mountain home ?
 Oh, sad with a pulseless tide
 Thro’ a waste of sand to roam !”

V.

“And yet I could flow,” said the stream,
 “If my way were thro’ meadows where bloom
 Lit up the broad spaces around,
 And danced in the wild thicket’s gloom ;
 And I think I could sparkle awhile,
 If I scented the moors and the broom.

VI.

“Or how happy my wave if at morn
 It could mirror bright faces and eyes ;
 Or at eve its soft plaining might join
 To the murmur of true lovers’ sighs ;
 And how good to my heart were the sound
 Of the villagers’ hymns as they rise !

VII.

“Oh to pass near the haunts of bright Art !
 To hear the hum of the halls !
 Oh, proud with my glory of song
 To sail by a brave city’s walls !

And I know I could sparkle awhile
By the flash of my waterfalls.

VIII.

“ But alone, all alone, with a heart
That for murmurs far off ever longs,—
I am sick of myself,” said the stream,
“ Singing ever my own same songs :
Yea, better than this were a life
'Mid the clash of a people's wrongs.”

IX.

So the rivulet murmured and sighed,
As a little breeze passed with a shiver,
And the moon coming out in the sky
Looked down with a smile and a quiver
Looked down on the little rivulet
That wanted to be a river.



MATRIS AMOR.

I.

THE memory of life's pleasant lines
 Lives strongest when we feel its thorns ;
 The worth of that we part from shines
 Most clearly upon farewell morns :
 And truly said that " absence makes
 The heart grow fonder "—Mother mine,
 How shall I sing this song that breaks
 In inner music half divine ?

II.

For oh, herein the heart is stirred
 With that the mind may never reach ;
 It almost seems as if a word
 Invading ground too pure for speech
 Must fall as empty sound : 'tis thus
 The thought of mother in a man
 Lies mystically tremulous
 With love e'en he can hardly scan.

III.

But you, I know you fain would take
Some filial, howe'er feeble, strain;
And I, the music I would make
Brings back my childhood once again:
The time that, past beyond recall,
Gleams goldening to its farthest haze
With joys (ah, simplest, best of all!)
Refracted from forgotten days,—

IV.

Days whose delights were never pale,
Each guarded by a mother's care;
Each hallowed by the twice-told tale,
The faltering of *unreasoning* prayer!
Then free from doubt in eyes upturned,
How beautiful the wistful glance:
And free from guile the heart that burned
At Mother's fervent utterance!

V.

Years took, yet gave. The memory swells
Of larger love that daily grew,
As thought struck sound from fuller bells,
And fuller landscapes streamed to view.
Then ripened boyhood deepening still
The channels that bring wealth of brain,
And self-rejoicing as each rill,
Each new-born rill, gave some fresh gain:

VI.

At flush and pause of conquest—ay,
And when the raincloud hung o'erhead—
Held pressed to heart unchangingly
The love which never can be said :
Stood gazing down into that well
Of *MATRIS AMOR* : loved to trace
The dear old lineaments that dwell
For evermore upon its face.

VII.

These, these I ponder. Mother mine,
My manhood scarce finds words to bless.
Oh, under heaven no purer wine
To stanch world-wounds and weariness ;
And under heaven no softer spell,
No holier universal law :
But are there simple words to tell
This only love without a flaw ?

VIII.

Nay, words are not. And tho' I rhyme
Of Mother's love throughout the earth,
I send no thought thro' space and time
To read the magic of its birth,—
And thence to trace its varied lot,
And drive a theory into school.
I call it flawless, caring not
To realize it as the rule.

IX.

For in good truth this single mind
Sees but one picture warm and true ;
The many mothers of mankind
May pass before a wider view ;
But looking down into that well
Of *MATRIS AMOR*, one alone,
One face I see, unspeakable—
And that one Mother is my own.

X.

Peace crown her years ! Be kind hearts near
To shield her from the ills of time ;
Be solace strong to comfort her ;
Be grace to make her life sublime.
The lesson of that lovely life
Be mine to learn, with heart upraised :
God keep her always,—tender wife
And tender mother : God be praised !



GODFATHER'S MONEY.

I.

Ay, lad, I'm tired of my life; I am old, too, my boy,
 and the years
 Somehow seem to have brought me few joys and
 more than my share of their tears.
 And men's tears are different to boys', Johnny lad, as
 you'll find when you're sixty years old;
 Not wetting the cheeks for awhile, my boy, but
 making the heart sad and cold.

II.

I've toiled over-much after riches and name: have
 they left me a single balm?
 And now in my need there comes home to me full
 that verse in the Psalm—
 Rising early, and late taking rest, and scarce heeding
 the good suns that shone:
 And what is the end of it all, my boy? Godfather's
 money is gone.

III.

And to think that my hair was like yours once, so
bright and so prettily curled,
And my heart was a child's heart once,—Johnny lad,
never be a man of the world!
If I had not been—but alas! it's weary work that
looking back;
Yet if the old days could return, I think I would go
on a different tack.

IV.

So papa has sent you to see me? Yes, yes, it is terrible
news,
And I wish, dear, I'd had sense like papa a life of
well-doing to choose.
You remember we saw the men ploughing the fields
last year when we rode in the cart?—
They made lines in the ground; and that's just what
money-making does to the heart.

V.

Money-making! Ah, yes—I was told when I wasn't
much older than you,
To strive like a man for a place in the world, and to
be a rich man too.
And I strove and got the riches, never heeding the
good suns that shone,—
And this is the end of it all, my boy: Godfather's
money has gone.

VI.

No matter, don't ask how it went—you put hard thoughts in my mind,
And, Johnny, it's near Christmas Day, you know, when we're told it's best to be kind;
Was it sent as a warning, this loss? I was choked by the world and its cares;
Yes, minding my business too much, and minding too little my prayers.

VII.

You open your eyes, little man, and you're wondering more and more
How an old man could be such a baby and fool as to set so much by his store:
God knows I'm a fool, a wicked old fool, with the Bible each week in my hand,
To have shut my eyes to the wind and rain and have built my house on the sand.

VIII.

Each week; yes, that's where it was—a Sunday religion at best:
On weekdays we work for a curse, and then on Sundays we pray to be blest.
And I said in my fool's heart, "One day—one day for a sermon, no doubt—
But six for the work of the world, we are told, when a man must be up and about."

IX.

Ay, Johnny, I'm tired of my life; so weary to have
lived so long,
And never to have learned the lesson that's told in a
little bird's song;
To have hungered for gold, without eyes for the hopes
that around me lay,
Looking downward and seeking a gain that is gone
in a single day.

X.

Yet not for myself: I stored for you all—for you
whom I hoped to set
In a fair high place in the world, quite free from a
poor man's fret.
I had many a high thought for you as I walked and
knelt and sat,
And I meant you to be good besides great—God
knows I meant that.

XI.

You see I knelt sometimes, but whenever I used to
pray
I did not look up far enough, but wanted to have my
own way.
It was, "I will make Johnny a man"—in my own poor
strength I stood,
Instead of "Make Thou my boy a great man if Thou
wilt, above all things a good."

XII.

And now the old world-dream is done; and I feel,
tho' I've many a friend,
That were it not for one thing my life were best at
an end.
Ah, but that one great thing! What, asleep! I have
waked you, my dear:
Yes, Godfather's coming, my boy; tell papa he'll be
there with New Year.



FLEUR DE CHARITÉ.

SHE was a flower meet for a king's throne,
 But then she chose her whole life long to pray ;
 She was a beautiful pale lady known
 As Fleur de Charité.

So clear and cold, with that about her brow
 Which earthly gaze too passionate reproved :
 Pure, in the memory of her vestal vow
 Moonlike she moved.

Yet in sweet pity she herself arrayed,
 For dying men and women were her care ;
 She prayed for passing souls, and easier made
 Their passage thro' her prayer.

So when the people heard that she was dead,
 There was not one who did not kneel to pray ;
 And many masses even now are said
 For Fleur de Charité.



AN EASTERN GREETING.*

(March, 1863.)

ROSE of Denmark, England's bride,
 Take our greeting o'er the sea !
 Welcome far and welcome wide—
 For strong tho' silent is the tide
 That finds no fitting revelry—
 The tide that rolls unto thy feet,
 To thee and Beauty loyalty !

Our eyes are dashed with happy pride,
 And, may be, an indignant tear
 That Englishmen should let it seem
 Their Eastern jewel flashed no gleam
 Into the glorious boundless stream
 Of Joy's true pomp which flooded thee,
 When wedding to our nation thine,
 Thou gavest in thy beauty's shine
 The gift received so rapturously !

* It will be seen that when these lines were written the writer shared in a feeling of indignation at the absence in India, even in the Presidency cities, of anything like a popular demonstration in honour of the Prince of Wales' marriage. The absence, however, though strange, was not due to any want of interest in the Prince or his bride.

Rose of Denmark, on the day
When tidings of thy coming came,
We followed thee with hearts that thrilled
To our brave countrymen's acclaim.
We saw thee as our land unrolled
That web of pomp which fold on fold
Thrown from all-circling triumph told
Of homage done most heartfully :
And lingering o'er the page that glowed
Beneath our eyes, we saw thee queen
Of pageant such as never flowed
In all the ages that have been.
Till, standing in the storied hall
Of God, we almost caught the tone
Of that "I WILL" that crowned thee wife,
And made thee his, and England's own.

Joining in thy marriage smile
Sea-king's shore to sea-loved isle :
Linking with a loving hand
Memories of either land :
Nurtured in the northern air
That nurtures men to 'do and dare' :
Wearing bloom of beauty rare,
Loved of England everywhere :
Take our greeting o'er the sea,
Take our love, for unto thee
Each English heart, where'er it be,
West or East, in welcome flows,
Rose of Denmark, England's Rose !

A FAREWELL TO SIR JOHN LAWRENCE.

ON HIS COMPLETING HIS TENURE OF OFFICE
AS VICEROY OF INDIA.

NOT without glory go, now laying down
Thy splendid state and crown of care : we know
Thy worth ; we knew thee long ago,
Valuing thy conscience more than world-renown.

The fair discharge of duty led thy youth
To manhood ; brought thee daily might and fame ;
Till, grown to greatness, thy most honoured name
Became a synonym for strength and truth,

Through thee and *him*, who lying far in light—
The goal he sought—a brother great and good,
Fearless, yet different, with thee ever stood
To champion what he deemed the cause of right.

Not without glory go : thy lofty place
Came to thee almost by a nation's voice :
If now thy farewell seemeth to rejoice
Any, it is but for a little space.

" Large promise needeth large fulfilment ; we
Had looked for larger sunrise from Lahore"—
Let them say on ; thou hast sufficient store
Of goodly deeds and words to honour thee.

✗ O Lion heart, now laying down thy state
Earned and ennobled by those brows, we know
Thy worth ; we knew thee long ago :
Content thee that thou goest not less great,
But greater.



FAMINE IN INDIA.

1865.

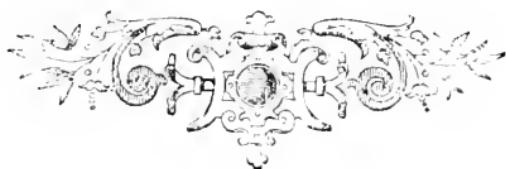
A SOUND as of mourning unmeasured, unknown, goes
hurrying over the land :
The swift dark wind of destruction sweeps on, coming
nearer each day.
Have the clouds of heaven no pity ? Will the Mighty
One stretch forth His hand ?
Ah ! what can a people do but toil and think and
pray ?

For our sins hast Thou chastened, withholding Thy
bountiful rain ?
They are many and great : our Father, it may be the
earth
Forgetteth Thee more and more in its lust after
glory and gain,
In its pride of new intellect, ease, and in wildness of
mirth.

But what have these done, the poor who are stricken ?
Thy ways
Are above us, not as ours, yet we know Thou art just

Is Thy love made known by a scourge? and shall
 fulness of infinite praise
Blossom out to Thy glory from lowliness trampled
 in dust?

Thou knowest: these tumults of want and of war are
 all set down in Thy plan.
Lead thro' them, O infinite Guide, to the garners of
 plenty and peace.
Give wisdom to those who have rule: let the mercies
 of man to man
Grow liker Thine; and save, and spare, and bid Thine
 anger cease.



JULY 1877.

GOD, who madest the sun,
God who sendest the rain,
Without Whom not one
Counteth aught to his gain :
Who holdeth the springs of all joy, and
Art Lord of all pain !

Spare, for the people are sick !
The thousands who lie
In the dust, and the quick
Who are dying—the cry
Of the children for bread, O consider !
Let this judgment pass by.

Turn, thou dread reaper Death !
Our fields are all bare ;
Thou hast toiled, and thy breath
Still hangs in the air ;
Thy harvests are full, but our garners
Have nought but despair.

“ Ye are clay, and the Hand
 Which moulded may break ;
 Ye have sinned, and your land
 Must parch for the sake
 Of your sins ; He is just.” But, O Giver !
 Give on, and not take.

Thou art just—yea, we know,
 But our minds are all dark ;
 Shall we see in this woe
 Of Thy justice a mark ?
 The rich have the light of Thy mercy,
 The poor not a spark.

What if now we be slain
 For your sins who are fed—
 If for you this our pain
 Who have stones to our bread ?
 Your sons and your daughters are living,
 Ours dying or dead.

Yea, 'tis true, that ye say,
 We have sinned and ye die.
 It may be one day
 Ye shall live and we cry
 To the rocks and the mountains to hide us,
 When God draweth nigh.

We know not His ways,
Yet we know He is just :
He commandeth to raise
His poor from the dust.
Let us stretch forth our hands ; in His mercy
Alone is our trust.



ALBERT EDWARD.

20TH DECEMBER, 1871.

I.

WE have waited days and nights, receiving
 Each message, hungering for a hopeful word ;
 When it came, rejoicing, and then grieving
 As the cloud returned to darken, and we heard
 Mournful whispers. Thro' the land no greeting
 Passed that craved not for a sign none could give ;
 Thro' the land a nation's heart has been beating,
 Loudly beating to the question—"Will he live ?"

II.

It is answered. Hope has conquered : fear is ended.
 Once we know how unequal was the strife.
 Dark the throne that in autumn seemed so splendid,
 While our prayers struggled wrestling for a life ;
 Then we murmured, "Is it vain for us to ponder
 On the future, the good which might have been ?"
 Our thoughts were on the sick room yonder,
 And we cried, "O our Princess ! O our Queen !"

III.

With a dread—God has turned it to thanksgiving.
 As we prayed, our thanks let us give.
 In our markets we proclaim, “ He is living,”
 In our streets we are saying, “ He will live.”
 All around us, over seas, hearts are throbbing
 With a joy scarcely any thought to know :
 E'en the stricken pause to smile in their sobbing,
 E'en our mourners find a solace in their woe.

IV.

Albert Edward, now we know thou wert nearer
 To our hearts than we ever dreamed before :
 Queen and Lady, let us say it, thou art dearer
 For this shadow that hath deepened at thy door.
 Yea, his kindred are our kindred all the stronger
 For the gloom which was England's and theirs ;
 Our Throne has lived long,—'twill live longer
 Now its tears have been mixed with our prayers.

V.

He is yours, gentle Wife, gracious Mother,
 Doubly yours by all those hours of despair ;
 Son and husband, loved father and brother—
 And a nation is rejoicing for its Heir.
 He is ours, English-hearted, steady
 To his friend, pure from party, and content ;
 Rich or poor, his smile was always ready,
 He took welcome and his sunshine where he went.

VI.

Do we look for something more, as we remember,
Turning back a sober people's reverent gaze,
All the meaning of that Fourteenth of December*—
Then so mournful, now so blessèd, among days?
Shall we ask for nobler strivings, new endeavour?
Surely any, prince or peasant, thus restored
From the grasp of death should seek them. May he
ever
Seek and find, by the mercy of the Lord!

* If the parallel between the Prince's illness and that of his father is not so close as at one time many persons supposed, no one doubts that this tenth anniversary of the good Prince Consort's death was ordained to be in a very special way a day of good omen to his son. Anxiously awaited (and how anxiously watched), it brought hope when England had begun to despair.



VERY TIRED.

SHE languished in the mild spring season,
A fair but fading flower ;
We said her sweet life was all sunset,
Without one shiny hour.
We loved, because she was our own,
And all her grace admired :
But fears were in our anxious eyes,
She seemed so very tired.

We brought her flowers gathered fresh
Beside the woodland brook ;
We placed the cushions round her head,
And lingered on to look.
In fondest love we questioned her,
And then but half retired :
“ Quite well,” sweet darling, she would say,
“ But only very tired.”

Unheeded sank the kind spring sun,
Our eyes were on her hair,
Where every slanting beam that fell
Was watched with jealous care.

Her lids did shadow angel-orbs,
We deemed her half inspired ;
And slowly said "good-night," and sighed
To see her very tired.

We shuddered when the cold church towers
Gave out their solemn knells ;
We wheeled her out upon the lawn
To hear the minster bells,
To see the rosy flames of light
That the west windows fired ;
But soon we wheeled her in again,
She was so very tired.

So night and morn flowed on, and stars
Came forth our child to bless ;
So daily grew our love, swathed round
With bands of tenderness.
But when the primrose paled she smiled
And died as she desired ;
Her soul went up to God because
On earth 'twas very tired.



FIRST LOVE.

I.

FIRST love—of course 'twas a boy's romance !
 Let it be so, let it be so.
 But why have I waked from the trance
 With a heart that cannot glow ?
 I shall never have such a chance
 Of happiness here below.

II.

There is nothing of wild regret
 Now mixed with the feeling I bear ;
 I have lived over that, and yet
 Have peace and content to my share.
 But O, can I ever forget
 The precious heart-throbbings that were ?

III.

There is many a one with face
 Fairer than hers ; but although
 It is years since I looked on the grace
 That bound me and won me, I know
 That no one can fill her place
 In my heart—and it must be so.

IV.

And this is my 'boy's romance':
A passionate thrill and a pain
To be cured by a pretty girl's glance—
Sunshine come after the rain?
No; it seems I have missed my chance,
And I look not for it again.



LADY GERTRUDE'S COURTSHIP.

THE VERE DE VERE.

I.

HOME returning from the glancing of bright eyes that
 in the dancing
 Seemed to speak a soft romancing that was very
 sweet to see,
 Dawn the orient transfusing found me still a-musing,
 musing,
 Whether, if she had the choosing, Lady Gertrude
 would choose me.

II.

Smoking long I sat recalling each sweet smile that
 happy ball in
 She had given me, not at all in way of flirting as I
 thought;
 I had heard her say benignly that Lablache sang not
 more finely,
 And that I danced "divinely," "as a Vere de Vere,
 sir, ought."

III.

And I've seen a letter written to her friend, Miss Lucy
Whitton,

In which she owned to being smitten by my grand
distingué air—

“ As a man that's greatly sought he's perhaps a little
haughty,

And I'm told he has been naughty (*Madame Coralie*
St. Clair).

IV.

“ But his legs are straight as larches, and his voice is
like Lablache's,

He wears the loveliest moustaches that ever graced
a peer;

Well-favoured as to stature and of true patrician
feature,

An agreeable grand creature is this Eugene Vere
de Vere.”

V.

Her aunts, I know, abuse me, yet I think she won't
refuse me

If I ask her—but, confuse me! I scarce know how
to try;

Though she talks with ease elastic, and her mind is
fresh and plastic,

She is fond of being sarcastic at times, I don't know
why.

VI.

Then I mused—"The word once spoken, you know it
can't be broken—

It's a nuisance," said I, smoking, "marriage with so
poor a house.

Yet the girl has thirty thousand, a tolerable town
house, and

A country place with cows, and a heather full of
grouse.

VII.

The St. Clair, too, has grown pensive, and her bills
are most extensive,—

I must act on the defensive in that quarter soon or
late."

So thinking of the glancing of those bright eyes in the
dancing,

That seemed to speak a soft romancing, I resolve to
learn my fate.

VIII.

Lucy Whitton first shall sound her: women always
have profounder

Tact than men, and can expound a thing of that
kind so much better.

Then I'll send her my own greeting after the next
Paris meeting,

To a tune of love's own beating in a most im-
passioned letter.

LADY GERTRUDE.

I.

So you think in my third season I've disturbed the
noble reason
Of a senator who'd freeze on all other girls but me ;
Just fancy Nova Zembla scorched by Cupid the
dissembler,
The Vere de Vere a trembler kneeling at a lady's
knee !

II.

Will he bend those straight young larches ? will he
coax those dear moustaches,
And in deep tones of Lablache's will my noble
suitor say,
"Lady, if with love thou burnest, if my ardour thou
returnest—
'Pon my soul I am in earnest—then perhaps you'll
name the day" ?

III.

Or, "Lady Gertrude, 'tisn't merely passing fancy ; no, I
really,
'Pon my soul I speak sincerely—ask Miss Whitton
if I don't"—
With his eyes fixed on the ceiling ?—What ! he always
is appealing
To "Miss Whitton's taste and feeling," though
acknowledge it you won't.

IV.

Oh, what is it that I can do to requite this Don Fernando,

This distinguished Whiskerando, for singling out
poor me ?

Are you sure you are not mistaken ? Just reflect : if
you awaken

Hopes that may be rudely shaken, I must lay me
down and dee !

V.

To have trapped a noble yearling, to have caught a
little peerling,

A fresh from college Vere de Vereling, might not
seem so strange, you know ;

But the Pacha of the Pachas, the Czar of all the
Russias,—

Oh, Lucy, spare my blushes, spare my heart's
exultant glow !

VI.

Am I joking ? Lucy gentle, maid of maids most
sentimental,

Do you think a joke in Lent 'll be forgiven by—
you know who ?

Your sweet Ritualist obdurate, of the chasuble and
poor rate,—

Ah, the hyacinthine curate ! well, I'll spare your
blushes too.

VII.

Will I just for once be serious? I, the faded belle imperious.

Gods of high Belgravia, hear ye us, plain answer must we make:

Here's a lord who sings and dances hath cast on us soft glances,

Or his ambassadress perchance is deluded by mistake.

VIII.

Do I recollect, dear, telling you last summer at Helvellyn

That I thought him the first swell in Town of all the swells I knew;

That I almost loved the Tories for producing such male glories,

And I felt sure half the stories against him were untrue?

IX.

On a pinnacle I raised him, I remember, and I praised him

In a way that might have crazed him, had he only heard the praise;

I was wilful, half in passion—Aunt Griselda had been lashing

In her own peculiar fashion at his wicked fame and ways.

X.

Have you never felt the rising that resents such catechizing?

Well, Aunt Grizzy's sermonizing winds me up, it seems, all wrong.

She will think it so distressing I love good dancing and good dressing .

More than lectures where the "blessing" is uncharitably long.

XI.

Where the world is all divided into chiders and the chided,

And the good things, all one-sided, bless the chiding folk alone ;

The ponderous sons and brothers, and a few Belgravian mothers,

Who confess the sins of others, now their dancing days are flown.

XII.

Drinking tea from purest china, Oh, nothing can be finer

Than their sentiments and sixpences showered on the abstract poor!

But for daughter's hand a fortune to secure they will importune,

Beg the rich man to come wooing, keep the poor one from their door.

XIII.

I am hard, perhaps, and bitter? So much need, then,
that a fitter

Than Lord Eugene Vere de Vere should seek to be
my guide.

What! these gentlemen of ease, when they're tired of
Coralies,

When their wild oats are all sown—to Belgravia
for a bride!

XIV.

For Belgravia sees no harm in wild oats of high-born
Brahmin :

When repentance is so charming, hard faces must
we show?

We are here to buy and sell: come, your lordship is
most welcome!

But Gertrude says, "No, thank you—a thousand
times, sir, NO!"

(TO HERSELF AFTERWARDS.)

Who am I that I should rail at the follies of my kind?
Nay, they follow fashion blindly: world-born, world-
bred, they are blind.

'Tis the fashion for our men to live wildly seeking
pleasure,

'Tis the fashion for our women to be worldly above
measure;

But they never loved as I have, never won a loving heart,

And then sacrificed to Moloch—‘ah! too poor, dear—we must part.’

I am hard; ‘tis true, I harden year by year and day by day,—

Will that old remembrance never, never pass away?

* * * * *

Oh, my dear, where are you? Over seas, and grieving still?

Nay, you have forgotten, for forget you may and will;

But for me the whisper comes—‘too late,’—‘too late’:

Are you not avenged? Oh, Arthur! my punishment is great.



A WISH.

I.

I WALK beneath the branching trees
 In a valley under a hill,
 And dear delicious memories
 My dreaming fancy fill.
 I would there were another form
 Beside me while I muse ;
 Another eye to mark these flowers
 All wet with the morning dews.
 I wish that you were here, sweet love !

II.

I climb the cold brow of the hill,
 Where whirl those gusts of air
 That always make a man's heart feel
 As if there were no care.
 The sunlight streams o'er half the vale,
 The cloud of mist is blown
 Right up the rocky mountain's side ;
 And because I am alone
 I wish that you were here, sweet love !

III.

The deer is drinking at the spring
 Which runs through the wood below ;
 Through the forest, full of murmuring,
 Comes the wild cock's early crow.

O ! you should have a lovely view
 Of hill and rock and tree,
 If you could take a pair of wings,
 And only come and see !

I wish that you were here, sweet love !

IV.

Yes, and whenever glance of mine
 Lights where a glory lies,
 I would that *you* were there, sweetheart,
 To sun it in your eyes ;
 For then, though every landscape failed
 To mirror Nature's grace,
 I'd *borrow* beauty for them, dear,
 By looking on your face !

I wish that you were here, sweet love !



MINNIE.

I.

I HAVE waked to sweet remembrance,
 Such as comes but once a life :
 I remember yester evening
 How I won her for my wife.
 Summer moths were thickly thronging,
 Clustered on the scented thorn ;
 Swept a gust of stormy longing,
 And my heart was overborne.

II.

She had talked how tyrants haughty
 Lest their loves alone to dwell :
 I had said 'twas 'very naughty,'—
 Thinking this would please her well.
 "All men's hearts were born for roving,
 Woman only—she endures."
 "Minnie, mine is full of loving,
 Yearning for the love of yours."

III.

On her hand her cheek was resting,
 Quick her little foot she stirred ;

Looked—to see if I were jesting,
Answered—not a single word.
Strange, those eyes the prude revealing,
Seemed to deem me but in play.
“Minnie, Minnie”—I was kneeling—
“Say me not, sweet darling, nay.”

IV.

There was end to all dissembling ;
Love had won his well-earned gains ;
Sudden blush and sudden trembling
Rushed like swift wind through her veins.
So I've seen in summer islands
Rain-clouds break upon the shore,
And have wondered that the landscape
Should have been so calm before.

V.

Round her hair the sunshine lingers,
While my happy fate I bless ;
I have clasped the trembling fingers,
And received the whispered Yes.
On to her own home we saunter,
Where I told them all I'd done ;
Of my impudent bold venture,
And the wife that I had won.

HERMIONE.

HER lustrous eyes my heart enthralled ;
I gazed, and loved to see
That lady classically called
Hermione.

The name had such a tender fall,
In every reverie
I seemed to hear a musical
Hermione.

And, bookman that I was, thy name
Of ancient poesie
First blew the spark that rose to flame,
Hermione !

Thy name, thy face, they are, sweet life,
Of Grecian mould,—but be
The model of an English wife,
Hermione !

ÆNONE.

I SAW Mount Ida wrapt in rosy flame :
A mournful symphony
Kept wafting up and down thy name,
Ænone !

Sure thou wast never destined to be blest :
Thy name it sounds to me
Of names the very mournfullest,
Ænone !

Ah, to be caught by that false-hearted boy !
Frail woman, could'st thou see
In Beauty's face thine only joy,
Ænone ?

And Paris blasted all thy fond desire ;
Alas, how cruelly !
Filled thy wild being with a flame of fire,
Ænone !

And then there loured upon thy lovely brow
The frown of jealousy ;
The crooked frown that liveth even now,
Ænone !

Thro' the bright mists of thine own Phrygian hill
Look, hapless one, and see
How Beauty lures to madness still,
Ænone !



IRENE.

As unto the eye a beautiful valley,
Dewy, and bright with morn, continually
Gives a delight, mine ear hath found the same,
Yea, a kindred joy hath found,
When sight translated into sound
Falls in thy musical voice and musical name,
Irene !

THE SCULPTOR AND THE BOY.

THE sculptor gazed upon Madonna's head :
 All forms of beauty could his hands unfold.
He looked upon the boy, and laughing said
 "Let's see what you can mould."

The boy too smiled, but not in merriment
 His eye spoke triumph in its kindling glance.
Into the world a *hero* forth he went,
 And moulded—Circumstance.

TEARFUL HELEN.

SHE can feel no joyous thrill of gladness
 When the throstle sings ;
 She is always looking on the dark side
 Of things.

Tearful Helen.

She can never see a young day breaking,
 Nor a red sun fall,
 Without drawing some sad truth, and murmuring,
 “ Fleeting all ! ”

Tearful Helen.

Helen, Helen, break this morbid quiet ;
 Earth already is too full of groans :
 Sing, Helen, smile, and let your laugh run riot
 In silvery tones !

Cheer up, Helen !

LOVE'S SLIP.

I.

HARD by yon elm so gaunt and bare,
 Just at the parting of the day,
 With hand in hand we swore that ne'er
 Our love should slip away.

II.

The woods with tender green were spread,
 When in the port the good ship lay,
 And outward-bound, "Sweetheart," I said,
 "Shall our love slip away?"

III.

"No, no," she vowed, and forth I sailed,
 Heartful of pulses of the May;
 But ere a score of moons had paled,
 Her love had slipped away.

IV.

And hot with thoughts of bitter kind,
 And love that still would stay,
 I sought to banish her from mind,
 Whose love had slipped away.

V.

I swore that I had quenched my pain :
 The still nights whispered, " Nay."

* * * *

Five years—and she was free again,
 Whose love had slipped away.

VI.

Free, free, almost a widowed bride—
 I crossed the sea to say
 Once more, " Sweetheart, I bow my pride :
 Shall our love slip away ? "

VII.

Hard by yon elm, with heart aglow,
 I met her in the open day ;
 And looking on her sweet face, lo !
My long love slipped away.



TU QUOQUE.

WELL, *tu quoque* ! Cara mia,
White-armed sophist, where's the wrong
If I point Tu Quoque at you
When the truth I speak is strong ?
Did you never do the same, dear—
Not that blushing morning when
First I called you *cara mia*—
Did you give Tu Quoque then ?

ROMANCE AND REALITY.

TALL, with grace and beauty beaming,
Empress o'er a husband's life—
I had fancied, in my dreaming,
Such a being for my wife.
Tiny, with a fairy's features,
Darkest-eyed, a laughing bride—
One of God's most clinging creatures,
She is sitting by my side.

A SKETCH.

I.

WITH feelings oft at ebb she seemed
 To lose no chance of making merry ;
 Responsive to all lights that gleamed,
 Keen, clever, and outspoken very.
 Judged by her speech, you would have thought
 She hated more than half creation ;
 But sick or sorry, none were brought
 In vain for her commiseration.

II.

Lenient to all men's sins but those
 Which break the laws of taste and fashion,
 She sometimes mocked at real woes,
 But oftener bathed them in compassion.
 She called it 'humbug,' 'trash,' to set
 Before one a too high ideal :
 The world had taught her this, and yet
 Had left her true and warm and real.

III.

That world she liked to praise at times,
And rather fancied that she knew it,
Ignoring quite its jangled chimes,—
As boys eat plums, and leave the suet.
And tho' she swore she never bore
EXCELSIOR upon her banner,
She knew some things worth living for
Besides good clothes and ease of manner.

IV.

To serve a friend I really think
She would not have stopped short of arson ;
Yet if a foe lacked meat and drink,
I'd back her against any parson—
Irreverent tho' the wilful mocks
That stamped her eminently human :
In short, with all her paradox
She was a genuine charming woman.



EVENING.

× How calm this twilight in the Indian land !
 A grateful sabbath fronting evening's brow ;
 The red sun in the west no larger now
 Than a man's hand.

The birds all gone to rest in the tall trees ;
 The distant bleatings of the flocks : anon,
 Their drivers' uncouth voices borne upon
 The modulating breeze.

A mass of rain-cloud from the hills upfurled,
 And lightning flashing many a swift surprise :
 God's blessed Night descending angel-wise
 Upon a weary world.

RAICHORE,
10th July, 1859.

THREE DELIGHTS.

THREE things I love,—who would not love these three?

Horace, the wise old poet Sybarite,
Full of the world, yet streaked with young delight :
A matchless sayer, whose good things we see
Time hold as tho' a last week's legacy—
Altho' the flavour of that old Falernian quite
Eludes translation. Like him—wit and light
Made liquid—Oh, there lingers lovingly
In my regard that bottle of Lafitte
We cracked last night—wine for a god to drink !
Horace, Lafitte, two joys : the third most sweet—
Claudine in lavender, with something pink
About her throat, and lightly tripping feet,
Makes many a young man turn and look, and think.

THE NERBUDDA VALLEY.

IN THE TRAIN, 14TH DECEMBER, 1876.

I.

AH ! Nerbudda Valley, rises somewhat sadly
 Vision of the love I gave thee years ago :
 Thro' thy waving corn-fields how often I rode gladly,
 All my pulses answering the fresh dawn's early
 glow.

II.

Then no screaming engine scared the wild deer
 browsing ;
 Twenty miles on horseback was journey for a day :
 'Twas a world untravelled cockcrow then arousing
 Called to yoke its oxen and lead its grain away.

III.

Crowned with corn and plenty, as aforetime thou
 wert crowned,
 Vindhyas and Satpooras thy guardian mountain
 - walls :

Still thy streams and woodlands gladden ; and
around
Are well-remembered places which memory recalls.

IV.

But the old familiar faces that gave me pleasant
greeting,
When I rested in thee, Valley, are no more :
They have passed to other lands ; as the fleeting
Of thy vapours are the names that they bore.

V.

Is there fruit from the seed of their endeavour,
In the field, in the hamlet, in the heart ?
The train bears me on—so 'tis ever
With our lives ; like the shadows we depart.



AT DELHI, 1ST JANUARY, 1877.

DATE OF THE QUEEN'S BEING PROCLAIMED
EMPERESS OF INDIA.

THE memory of the silent dead—

Who can forget it standing here?

That other vision rises clear—

We see the camp that fought and bled,

Scarce twenty years ago : we see

The walls still marked by shot and shell,

The places where our heroes fell,

And we behold the pageantry

That makes the Delhi of to-day

A sign of Empire such as yet

On monarch's brow was never set,

A symbol of imperial sway

Unrivalled : long may it endure,

Mindful of all its soldiers' deeds,

Friend of the poor when Pity pleads—

And, godlike Justice, keep it pure.

THE VACANT ROOMS.

O WONDROUS life of gleams and glooms !
Who feels the pictures others make ?
At last I realize the ache,
The long dull ache of vacant rooms :

The pain of silence most complete
Where lately that loved presence thrilled ;
And not a room that is not filled
With echoes of the children's feet,

The children's voices. Yet that these
Might soon depart—I wished it so ;
To place my plants beyond the glow
Of these fierce suns by our own seas,

That was for months a daily prayer.
And even now, O happy twain !
I would not call you back again
From health and bloom and English air.

The charm of all your winning ways
Grows brighter under English skies ;
I would not have it otherwise—
For this my heart hath only praise.

Altho' the music of my life
Be less, 'tis something to be spared
The vigils fear with love hath shared,
In days with Indian peril rife.

'Tis something that afar the cheek
Which here was wan doth wear the rose :
And yet, sweet gifts of God, He knows
I miss you more than I can speak.

And O that larger void ! the loss,
My little ones, which is your gain—
(In that lies solace to the pain
Of many a father's weary cross :

In that, and knowing it was well
For her to seek by western seas
A milder sun, a fresher breeze).
What of that void ? Ah ! none can tell,

O wondrous life of gleams and glooms,
Save he who knows it, how it makes—
Tho' many a star shoot thro' its aches—
A desert of these vacant rooms.

A YEAR AGO.

THE future, ah ! who can tell ?

A year ago I was grieving,
And thought I had said farewell
For ever to joy and mirth.
For a year ago I was leaving
All that I loved on earth.

Alone to a land afar

A year ago I was going,
With but one hope for a star
In the night that seemed so dark :
A star in the distance showing
As tho' it were a spark.

But, blessed be healing Time !

The spark grows larger and clearer ;
Night wears, and the morning's prime
Breaks on that grief's chill snow.
And I smile, as my joy comes nearer,
Thro' the tears of a year ago.

NAMELESS GRACE.

WHEREVER she goes she takes her place
Without an effort to claim it ;
It is all because of a subtle grace,—
It would puzzle a poet to name it.
Is she young and fair, is she short or tall ?
There are taller and younger and fairer ;
But somehow she seems to eclipse them all,
Because she is brighter and rarer.

It is nameless grace, it is exquisite light,
Poured in from some window or portal
In the land where the fairies emerge at night,
To gladden the dreams of mortal.
Yet withal she is loving and kind and human,
And each pout or smile on her face
Is the pout and smile of a dear true woman,
Who is full of a nameless grace.

AMELIA MURPHEY.

Extract from "Times" of 15th January, 1877.—"On Friday afternoon Mr. Humphreys held an inquiry at the African Tavern, Poplar, concerning the death of Amelia Murphey, aged 23. It appeared that the deceased was the honest and well-conducted wife of a seafaring man now on a voyage to Melbourne in the ship *Hampshire*. Her only income, on which she had to support herself and a large family, was £2 5s. per month. In consequence of sickness and other family troubles, she often spent her little money before the end of the month, and to enable her to get food for the children she had to pledge some of the small articles of her scanty home or to run credit. A week or so ago she obtained an old skirt from a Mrs. Bates, who was her landlady, to whom she was to pay 3s. as best she could. The poor creature with some exertion paid 2s.; and on Monday last Bates, accompanied by a man, called upon the deceased for the remaining shilling. Not possessing the money, and knowing the violent character of Bates and her friend, deceased at first feigned being out; but in consequence of the disturbance which Bates and the man created at the house, she made her appearance and promised to try and raise the money. Later in the day Bates and her companion called upon deceased again, and after abusing her, only left the house on the understanding that the deceased was to raise the money and bring it to the Horn of Plenty Tavern, where they were to remain. The poor creature then took the shoes from off some of the children's feet and pawned them, and took the money as promised. Trembling and crying bitterly, she exclaimed before Bates and in the hearing of several witnesses that she could bear her troubles no longer, and that she would kiss her dear children once more and then drown herself. She then left much agitated, and was not seen afterwards until dragged from the West India Docks quite dead. The Coroner said there could be no doubt the woman Bates had, by her inhumanity, driven the deceased to destruction. He should have bitterly repented receiving from a poor creature with no bread for her children 1s. under

such circumstances. The jury returned a verdict that deceased had been driven to suicide through distress, and the conduct of the woman Bates, who they hoped would be severely censured by the Coroner."

IN the midst of the richest city
The world has ever known ;
For want of a scrap of pity,
For want of a heart of stone—
Because she was sober, had striven
To keep her children in bread ;
Was abused and hunted and driven—
Poor thing ! that's why she is dead.

Her husband away on the ocean,
She toiling from morning till night,
With the strength of a mother's devotion,
To do what was honest and right :
Then sickness and trouble o'ercame her,
In her last need she found not a friend
To assist : can any one blame her,
Poor thing ! for her rash sudden end ?

Had her heartstrings only been tougher,
Had she only known how to stand
And see her dear little ones suffer—
Had she had but one shilling in hand—
One shilling to give her oppressor,
One shilling to purchase relief ;
Oh, to think of that woman (God bless her !)
Killed outright by such terrible grief !

She had pinched, she had pawned, till her raiment
Was scant—nay, her children's as well :
Must she take off their shoes for the payment
That shilling is wanted to swell ?
Ah ! merciful Christ, in Thy glory,
In the day when Thy judgments deliver
The poor and oppressed, shall this story
Which comes to us now from the river,

Not plead for a wild mother—pardoned,
For the dear ones she left ? Shall it stand
For reproach unto any who, hardened
By treasures in houses and land,
Are as steel to the angels of pity,
To the griefs of the poor are as stone,—
In the midst of the richest city
The world has ever known ?



ON THE GREAT SCENE IN DICKENS'
"TALE OF TWO CITIES":

SYDNEY CARTON'S LAST MORNING.

A LIFE that was sullied and tainted
Redeeming a storm-laden past !
Was there ever a picture so painted
Of a sinner a hero at last ?
Of a love self-renouncing, self-scorning,
Like that which possessed this man's heart ?
With the brow of a child on that morning
He rode to his death in the cart.

" Greater love," saith the Master, " hath no man
Than his who will die for a friend " :
Is it only the love of a woman
We see in this life's noble end ?
Nay, beyond it and through it, enfolding
Its path thro' the Dark Valley's shade,
There was GOD shining down, and beholding
Himself in the man He had made.

A STORM WAVE IN BENGAL.*

31ST OCTOBER, 1876.

I.

BRING the lamp a little nearer,
 What's the news? I read . . . at first
 Can scarcely grasp it—till as nearer
 The words stand out, each reader, hearer,
 Exclaims with something like a groan,
 “Good God! a terrible cyclone
 Has burst.”

II.

Shipping, trees, houses, blown away and shattered!
 Think of a storm-wave whose destructive sweep
 Is traced by human bodies, dead and scattered
 O'er leagues by thousands—as if those lives
 mattered
 No more than sheep.
 Think of a hundred thousand swept away—
 Alive to-night, and dead at break of day!

* The story of this appalling calamity, the loss of human life occasioned by which has been variously estimated at from 100,000 to 200,000, will still be fresh in the minds of readers in India.

III.

What mind can realize this awful story?
And yet we read the lilies of the field,
The flowers which now with morning dewdrops
 hoary
Outshine great Solomon in all his glory,
 Are not concealed
From God, are not uncared for ; not a sparrow
Falls but He knows it. Are His mercies narrow

IV.

To man alone ? At times when devastation
 Of war, flood, famine, earthquake, lights on those
Whose sin is less than that of many a nation
And many a household spared, we think Creation
 Mocks with its woes
All order, justice : we forget that man
Knows little of the great Creator's plan.

V.

What if a hundred years of earth's best favours
 Be as a pin's head to the time beyond ?
If all our evil things and pleasant savours
Are as a sunbeam that a moment wavers ?
 What if the bond
Which binds us to the bodies that we cherish
Is frail—that we may seek what will not perish ?

VI.

Can we explain such woes by sagely saying,
 “The laws of average—so many die
 In every cycle ; eating, drinking, playing,
 Swept off the board—in spite of fasts and praying”?
 ‘Nay,’ we reply,
 ‘Is not the flag of evil still unfurl’d ?
 We know God’s judgments are in all the world.’

VII.

In presence of this awful judgment, surely
 We feel “we know not anything”: the soul
 Sinks almost drowned, in sight of stars that purely
 Gleam up above; the shore tho’ looms obscurely,
 The surges roll
 Between us and the infinite far haven
 Which Life approaches with a spirit craven.

VIII.

We know not anything, but oh, within
 We feel we must have something to believe :
 Refuge for care, and pardon for our sin.
 Too oft ’tis trouble makes our faith begin ;
 Until we grieve
 The soul lies dead, and the immortal spirit
 Rests satisfied with earth and worldly merit.

IX.

But ah ! in face of news like this, how little
Appears the greatest man upon the earth !
The crowns of kings and queens how poor and
brittle !
Man's grandeur shrivels to a speck, a tittle—
While joy and mirth
Seem, by the side of such stupendous woe,
Things almost wrong for us who live to know.

X.

Yet we shall laugh and dine perchance to-morrow
Without a thought of that death-dealing wave :
The comfort misery from hope would borrow,
The wail of thousands stricken down in sorrow,
The hands that save,—
They are so far, and we—our own affairs
Press in so closely with their joys and cares.

XI.

Just think ! each one of those who died that night
Died by the will of our All-seeing God.
Not that they were more sinful in His sight
Than we who slept and hailed the morning's light—
We who have trod
In ways we feel and long have understood
To be remote from those which He calls good.

XII.

He hath sent signs to nations : looking back,
 We think we can read some in the world's youth—
 Rome and Pompeii foremost in the track :
 God's anger kindled against earth for lack
 Of love and truth !

Oh, friends, can we not read between the lines ?
 Yea, England, unto thee there may be signs.

XIII.

Thy rule hath prospered, and thy lands have peace,
 The slave hath blest thee and the slave shall bless.
 But, as thy wealth and merchandise increase,
 Shall zeal for God and Right grow slack or cease ?

Thou art not less
 Than Rome was in her old imperial days :
 Beware the danger of luxurious ways !

XIV.

The poor cry out, thy great heart beateth true ;
 But hasting to be rich, thy busy marts,
 With eyes kept downward, see not, care not, who
 Are poor, until thy halls and markets thro'
 A wild scream darts,—
 Then hearts are loosed and eyes are upward bent
 Awhile—and men go on as erst they went.

XV.

‘Men’—yes, ‘tis easy to confess for others,
For England, for a nation. Our conceit
Allows us to reprove our friends and brothers,
Ourselves too—in the plural, for that smothers
The inward heat
That must rise up if conscience closely scan
Our private ways and say, “Thou art the man.”

XVI.

Some sow and reap, and others reap who sow not.
We count our luck for merit, and we sigh,
“The workings of His Providence we know not :
The floods that rise, the withered streams that
flow not ;
The misery
With which Creation groaneth : all are sent
To shadow forth, no doubt, some wise intent.”

XVII.

Yea, leave it so. Thank God we live to-day
To point the moral. Oh ! if that dread wave
Which buried thousands could but sweep away
The Self we worship as our god of clay—
Then o'er its grave
We should know more of the Creator's plan
In having more of love to God and man.

DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

HE is dying, that old year
 Whose glad birth we all remember :
 Come, and gather round, and listen
 To the last sob of December.
 Let the old year pass in silence :
 Do not laugh, nor shout, nor sing :
 For, my brothers, who may reckon
 What the coming year shall bring ?

He is dying : speak in whispers.
 If you will, kneel down and pray,
 By the memory of that dear one
 Who was here last New Year's Day.
 Ponder slowly, sadly, deeply :
 While these last few moments fly,
 Let our thoughts be on the far land
 Where the year shall never die.

He is dead. Drop down one big tear
 For the friend you loved so long :
 Throw about our pleasant greetings,
 Crown the New Year with a song.

Then go on and gird for duty :

Take this promise fresh and true—
'There *was* blessing in the Old Year,
There *is* blessing in the New.'



DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

DRAW the long day to a close,
 The “slow sad hours” that are the Old Year’s last :
 To-morrow he shall sleep with those
 His ancestors, entombed in the great Past.

He dies, a warrior brave ;
 And the wind makes mournful mass in the trees.
 Lower him gently into his grave
 With the cords of a hundred memories.

Speak to him—ah no, stay !
 They are ringing the New Year’s chime ;
 And he is millions of miles away,
 Making his march with the ghosts of Time.

The old man died a king,
 So royally he gave up his last breath ;
 And he showed us that majestic thing,
 The repose of a solemn death.

Good-bye ; we must greet the heir
 Who sits already on his father’s throne.

Good-bye, old friend—we'll drop a tear,
To make the grass grow round your cold
gravestone.

Your funeral banquet too
We'll celebrate by crowning your young boy :
New Year, a glorious health to you !
New Year, I give you joy !



CHRISTMAS IN INDIA.

CHRISTMAS ! at Home how they're playing it
 Away with good fun and good cheer ;
 The holly in house and in street,
 The welcome how old, yet how sweet,—
 They are all of them saying it,
 “A merry Christmas and happy New Year !”

How keen the cold air out of door is !
 Within, ah ! the fireside dear :
 O the kisses of sisters and mothers !
 O the hearts of our own and of others !
 The song of the rich and poor is
 “A merry Christmas and happy New Year !”

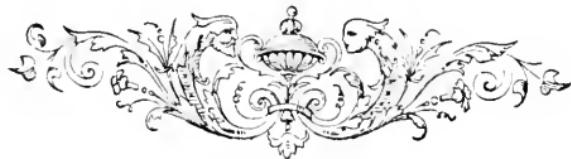
Christmas ! just think how they're feeling,
 Those at Home upon furlough this year ;
 How gladly they're taking a part,
 'Mid prayers going up from the heart,
 In the laughter that's pealing
 An English Christmas and happy New Year !

Out here is it Christmas ? before us
 So few of its features ; we hear

Kind wishes of friends glad at meeting,
But how much do we miss in the greeting—

Well, well, we will join in the chorus,
“A merry Christmas and happy New Year!”

For 'tis Christmas all over. If aching
Be mixed here and there, never fear,—
There's the thought of the Prince of the Morn,
Of peace and goodwill ever born
To all, for continual making
Of merry Christmas and happy New Year.



SURGIT AMARI ALIQUID.

I.

IN your fullest time of gladness,
When your days held joyous store,
Passed there never film of sadness,
Blurring all the landscape o'er ?
Was not half of all its sweetness
Blotted by a thought of pain
At the want of that completeness
Which alone makes joy remain ?

II.

When your heart with hope was springing
Free from sorrow's after strife,
And a sound of pleasant singing
Filled the Maytime of your life,
Faltered not the voice that, hailing
Youth and love, proclaimed delight ?
Came between no note of wailing
Stirred by pauses of the night ?

III.

Aims your youth had been pursuing
Faded as your manhood grew :
Then when you were 'ware that *doing*
Was the noblest thing to do—
Wakeful, ere the red day-breaking
Into smiles the darkness kissed,
Felt you not a nameless aching
For a something you had missed ?

IV.

Ay, you knew it ; in your laughter,
In your revels, in your gloom ;
Heard you not the dread Hereafter
Shake the air with muffled boom ?
Ay, it reached you surely ? Stirred not
Then your heart to pray and bless ?
Oh, God help you, if you heard not
That good signal of distress !

V.

Only once ? Nay, often, often,
Daily is that warning waved ;
Hardening when it may not soften,
Knelling shipwreck, crying 'saved.'
* * * * *
Cause enough why broken sweetness
Dwelt in all those joys that came ;
You were robbed of their completeness—
Reaped you in your Father's Name ?

RELIGION.

HAVE we known what it is to crave
 For some object of fond desire—
 Whether of Passion the slave,
 Or of Love that is higher :
 Have we drank to our soul's behest,
 And ate of the fruit of our will ;
 And found at the end of each quest
 Something to long for still ?

Have we not ? says the heart : Oh, what is it,
 This mystery ? Nay, it is Man :
 The wake of an angel's visit,
 The trace of a God-like plan,
 Crossing ever the web of his being :
 Yea, this discontent is divine :
 Is Religion, believing not seeing—
 Of the *soul* is the sign.

LUCK.

THE history of the wrinkles on our brows—

Thank God we cannot write it ! We may tell
Of things which helped to grave them ; Time allows

Such retrospect as makes the heart to swell,
The eyes run over ; yet in mercy deadens

The sharpest grief ; and thro' the darkest night
Some ray of morning, e'en tho' slowly, reddens.

God comforts those who wait and seek for light.

He chastens whom He loves ; yet we repine,

And call His chastenings *luck*—as if some Fate
Vexed us for sport, and mixed with bitter brine

Some lives at random. Is the unequal state
Of rich and poor, of weak and strong, all chance ?

Is health but chance ? Ah ! could we realize
That Love ordains each single circumstance,

Our cares would plough less deep, our joys more
quickly rise.

THE GREAT MYSTERY.

To sleep, and to be dumb to all
 The changing days and years invent ;
 To throw away our discontent,
 And lie beneath the Past's thick pall :

To feel in flesh nor woe nor bliss ;
 To be past praying for, shut out
 From all save one stupendous doubt---
 O Father, who can fathom this ?

Thy justice ? yea, but who are we
 Who look thro' Reason's narrow bars,
 To judge of right beyond the stars ?
 We bow in faith to Thy decree.

In faith—twin mystery with death,
 But palpable to human sense,
 Thro' living blest experience ;
 But how shall he who hath no breath

Tell of that other mystery ? how
 Shall aught of certain be revealed ?
 Shall death its awful secret yield
 By looking on a dead man's brow ?

The mother who hath lost a life
But lately hers, and that which grew
With her own being, looking thro'
The lineaments yet wholly rife

With a seraphic calm, may hold
The mournful, beautiful, release
Of death to be but sobs and peace,
Nor seek in ponderings manifold

Slow-wrought conviction ; but of him
Whose sins outweigh his prayers, for whom
The glad fruition of the tomb
Shines not, or shining flickers dim,—

‘Save one stupendous doubt,’ I said,
Lost in the musing of my mind,
That strove, in error undesigned,
To touch the mystery of the dead :

Which only Faith with reverent hand
May raise. This is the dream of fools,
To frame for Reason Babel-rules,
And place her where she cannot stand.

Twin mystery Faith, if seek I aught
Of knowledge with maturer brain
That sifts the child-learned creed, restrain
The boasted freedom of free thought :

Freedom of thought that is not free,
 But glossed by fancied power's pretence,
 The slave of its own impotence,
 Of its chill doubting misery !

“ Yet should'st thou weigh all creeds and judge
 With wisdom ”—so an echo runs—
 “ Thy thought is not as every one's.
 Doth God owe other men a grudge

Because they smile at that which thou
 Callest the truth ? ” I know not ; yet
 I know no doubtings should beset
 For me that first baptismal vow.

Naught judge I : man by God is tried,
 Not by his fellow : yet have I
 · No ancient landmark to hold by,
 No faith for which our fathers died ?

Great mystery, Death ! thou makest plain
 All things to all ; I pray thee come
 When life and thought range nearest home—
 The home where Truth's pure angels reign.



SUNBEAMS IN THE CHANCEL.

I.

THERE were sunbeans in the chancel yester evening
glancing red,
And the preacher wove them sweetly into the holy
words he said :
There were twilight hues of evening that loomed
athwart the nave—
And the good man's sermon travelled to the twilight
of the grave.

II.

“ For, good friends, the grave is twilight land, thick
darkness reigns not whole ;
Tho' the earth-gloom wrap the body round, the
heaven-beams flash the soul.
Dear brother hearts, I pray you specd, make friends
with your last day ;
And you shall give death welcoming so you ponder
heaven alway.

III.

“ There is blessedness unspeakable in that heaven
where we all may go,
Where some have gone already”—and here the
tender tones brake low,
While remembrance fell upon us all, as the mist
falls on the moor,
Of a sweet and saintly lady, a wife who went among
the poor.

IV.

“ Joy, brothers, for the dear blessed ones who die in
Christ the Lord,”
Rose the pleading voice of earnestness on the swell
of each wave-like word.
“ Glory for the grand old martyr men who the
Christ-like way have trod,
Hope in the comfort-creed, in the communion of
saints and of God.

V.

“ We needs must strive and suffer awhile, with cares
and fears,
This earth tho’ fair we call it in truth a vale of
tears ;
Were it not sweet at even to close these heavy eyes,
To see the morrow morning on the hills of Paradise ?

VI.

“ There is more than tongue can utter, than loftiest dream conceives,
In that sun-lit harvest-heaven where the Lord God binds His sheaves ;
Where the moonlight on the City falls with a holy grace,
And the moonlight and the sunlight are the Lord God’s glorious face.

VII.

“ My friends, shall earthly phantoms these hopes of glory mock ?
My children in Christ Jesus, my own beloved flock,
I travail with long pleadings, in labours oft of prayer,
That you may reach the Heaven-gate and find acceptance there.

VIII.

“ Fain would I leave some watchword to guide you in the strife,
For it seems to me that shortly I must put off this life.
I charge you, men and women, whatever hap betide,
Abide by your Redeemer ; cling to the Crucified.

IX.

“ If unbelief cast shadows, and doubtings vex your mind,
Cry ‘ Jesus Christ,’ press onward, throw not a thought behind.
If Passion drive his whirlwind, or Pleasure whisper lies,
Call Jesus Christ, and calling, your prayers shall cleave the skies.

X.

“ Old men and hoary-headed, look well, remember now
Those broken past professions, that first baptismal vow :
World-stained you are, as all must be beneath life’s sultry noon,
Save innocent pure babies who go to God so soon.

XI.

“ Long years have left their footprints in our faces lined with care,
While the snows that come in winter time have settled in our hair ;
We have passed the summer islands where our life we loved to spend,
Yea, the autumn reefs have faded, and the voyage nears its end.”

XII.

The rector's blue eye brightened ; ' he sees the new
Land now,'
Methought, as a still solemnity was gathered on his
brow.
O man of God, there are wings of light waiting for
thee on that shore—
Thine own good deeds of charity which have flown
to Heaven before !

XIII.

Then again rang out the sermon, and exhortation
found
For the men in middle manhood with grace and
vigour crown'd ;
Full well he knew the triumph of a name with
honour deck'd,
For he garnished Christ's simplicity with a glorious
intellect.

XIV.

And he showed Fame's shifting countenance with
light and shadow blent,
And summed up that bold eloquence with the old
great argument—
" If all these things be fleeting and a grave to all be
given,
Why barter for a phantom the reality of Heaven ? "

XV.

Then carrying back swift fancy to the fresh spring
days of youth,
He clothed with woman's tenderness the solemn
words of truth ;
Smiting world creeds and maxims with a pure
mind's loyal shock—
So pleading for his Master with the young ones of
his flock.

XVI.

The swerd of judgment glittered : “ Young men, be
timely wise ;
Paint not the devil's pictures, your sins, in Tyrian
dyes ;
For the plaudits of that bad world you deem so
fairly deck'd
Wake echoes of God's thunder, avenging God's elect.

XVII.

“ Down with the lustful fury that fain would take its
fill :
A thousand times do battle with the darling sinful
will :
Do it because Christ told you, because it must be
done ;
And with *Onward* for your watch-cry the fight is all
but won.”

XVIII.

He closed the book and ended, as the sun threw one
last smile

That lit the painted window and flickered down the
aisle.

Then the good man gave the blessing : and when
we knelt to pray

The sunbeams in the chancel had vanished quite
away.



COMFORT.

EACH preaches comfort, each his creed despises.

What comfort when the night wears desolate and dreary?

The worn soul sickens as the pale thought rises—

Take me away, for I am faint and weary.

All can speak comfort after some cold fashion :

But comes no soothing, hearts still toss about.

Give me some dew to quench the drought of passion,

Give me some spell to lay the storm of doubt.

Nought but bright Faith can cleave when shadows thicken,—

Hold this sure word in your first calmer mood ;

When memories rise and whelming fancies sicken

’Twill serve to blunt the edge of solitude.

Say in the dead night, “ There is many a hundred

Laden with woes o’ermeasuring mine in weight :

Hearts many a thousand from all comfort sunder’d,

Grown hard and cold through that which we call
Fate.”

Whisper, "It may be the great Father's anger
Is kindled at my cold untrustful living"—
Rise, let His promise pierce your deadening languor,
Clasp the blue heaven with prayer and loud
thanksgiving.

Think of Gethsemane: balm you shall borrow
From those few words that o'er its portals shine.
Read, "Look and see if there be any sorrow
Like unto Mine."



FAITH.

ST. MATTHEW XIV. 25—31.

WHEN the winds and waves were high
 And their boat unto peril was nigh,
 The disciples saw in the storm
 A strange mysterious Form
 Walking upon the sea,
 And one cried in His agony,
 “Oh, bid me come unto Thee,
 Lord, if it be Thou !”

Toiling, weighed down by fears,
 With eyes too hard for tears—
 Pain at the heart and on the brow,
 Weary and worn, I murmur now,
 As Peter cried on the sea,
 “Oh, bid me come unto Thee,
 Lord, if it be Thou !”

“ If it be Thou,” he cried,
 And straightway a Voice replied
 “ Come ”: and he walked on the wave
 Thro’ the faith that alone can save.

Yet again, as the wind rose high,
Rang out the despairing cry
“Save, or I perish !” Ah ! then
The mercy of God unto men
Was shown in the arm stretched out,
In the love that pitied his doubt.

Am I not tost on a sea ?
Yea, I sink as I come unto Thee.
Save, if it be Thou !

Because of that *if*—is that why
The heavens vouchsafe no reply ?
If Peter the fisherman heard
'Mid the roll of the storm-wave that word
COME—if it sounded so clear
To him, why cannot I hear
Who know more than the world then knew ?
He had faith, I am told, and so
The thing he believed came true.
The selfsame thing which I say
I believe—in a different way.

O for a faith that would bear me
Out of this narrow cold sphere,
Where I shrink from the sin that would snare me,
Less thro' love of the Christ than from fear !

Where 'tis good to be moral and stolid,
To provide for oneself and one's own ;
And the virtues men praise as most solid
Leave the hungry and outcast alone.
O for a faith that would teach me
To spring forth in love, and be sure
If I sink there are Arms that will reach me—
O for faith and for love to endure !



OBEDIENCE.

"Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather, then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean."—2 KINGS v. 12—13.

REBEL hearts ever fretting and storming :

Rebel minds with a self-moulded plan:

Ever to do some great thing

Longing, yet seldom performing

The least of the duties laid down for a man !

And this we are most of us doing,

Repining, resolve, and remorse

Alternating so sadly, and strewing

Our paths with dead ashes for flowers,

While still in the lapse of the hours

Ever to do some great thing

We are longing, but ah ! not pursuing

The God-given way, the Christ-ordered course.

O worm as thou art, grandly swelling

With vanity ! deep in the dells

Of the earth, far away from world's ken,
And unseated in Honour's fair place,
There are those, there are mortal-mould men,
Greater-souled than thyself, who live lives
Made lovely by heartfullest prayers,
And sublimed by that living which dwells
Content, like the stars, with mere telling
Of glory and honour and grace—
God's glory and honour, not theirs.

Yet faint not, but turn, tho' the pride
Of the Syrian thy spirit incline,
And thou scornest the meed of thy prayer ;
Yet faint not, but faithful abide :
God's Jordan hath healing—but thine
Is a water of tempest and care.

The waves of our choosing seem fair,
And in them bright glories may shine ;
But obedience, contentment, declare
A glory far brighter—divine.



“SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO
COME UNTO ME.”

My little girl lay sleeping
In a room where the moonbeams smiled ;
And I stood by her bedside keeping
A vigil of love o'er the child.
I said, I said in a whisper,
“ As her nightgown white is her soul.
May my darling be pure and spotless
Till she reaches her heavenly goal ! ”
Then I knelt down by the bed,
And prayed to Him who said,
“ Suffer the little children to come unto Me.”

Unseen the dark angel was taking
His way o'er my threshold, for soon
Came a few quick sobs and a waking
Far away from the light of that moon.
I laid her to rest in the churchyard,
In her nightgown white—but her soul,
Pure soul, was away with the angels,
Far away at the heavenly goal.
And I look on the empty bed,
And think of Him who said,
“ Suffer the little children to come unto Me.”

YORK MINSTER REVISITED.

A FRAGMENT, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 1871.

‘TIME changes not,’ I say, standing near thee,
 O Minster, clothed in calm, the same
 I knew long years ago. Ah! many a knee
 That bent with mine is turned to dust—
 How solemnly
 That memory strikes! But still His holy Name
 Is glorified: and dew from Heaven falls
 As prayer and anthem rise within these glorious walls.

Mother of prayer to careless moments! how
 Should I behold thee, coming back once more
 From a far land of exile? Minster, thou
 Art pure and grand and stately as before;
 But unto me thy majesty doth seem
 To speak reproach; the old familiar lines
 Of beauty speak, and from thy windows stream
 Lights that to me dwell not in other shrines.
 Pure Sisters,* since I saw you last—
 O how your vestal brightness shames that darkened
 past!

* Among windows to be remembered for evermore by those who have seen them are the Five Sisters in York Minster.

Grey towers, ye know here in your quiet shade
My boy's faith quickened—if ye only knew
How oft since then these erring feet have strayed !
Sin and the world have courted me to new
Delights, new creeds : but Minster, thine are true.
Standing again upon this hallowed ground,
I feel how much is lost, how little have I found.



CUI BONO?* (1874.)

I.

O MINDS given over to Rhoda
 Broughton and volumes three !
 O lips loving brandy and soda !
 Like passionate foam of the sea
 Be the swell of unshackled emotions :
 They are bigots who say that in vain
 We seek in such philtres and potions
 A solace for pain.

II.

Let Wisdom abide in her grotto,
 Old saws and old landmarks we spurn ;
 Faith is dead, and *Cui Bono* our motto :
 Let her ashes repose in the urn !
 Be honest, and burn up the fences
 Of creeds that “ refuse and restrain ” :
Vive la joie ! let the play of the senses
 Be solace for pain !

* I hope these verses do not go beyond the bounds of lawful satire. They were written some years ago, and were intended to show the lengths to which certain poetry, belonging to what has been termed “the Fleshly School,” might be pushed if not restrained.

III.

I say not the code of the Stoic
Holds nought for a man to admire ;
I deny not that Paul was heroic,
That a life was once lived even higher ;
But these things, do they come to us real ?
Cui Bono—to toil and to strain
After shadows, a hopeless ideal,
For solace for pain ?

IV.

One thing, O my friends, we are sure of—
Life is short, and the man who resists
The delirium of wine or the lure of
A woman, thro' fear of the mists
Of unreason his childhood that frightened,
Misses that which may ne'er come again :
What tho' conscience hereafter be lightened ?
Is that solace for pain ?

V.

Where is Conscience? Methinks we may smile at
That vague undefinable thing.
What is Truth? let us ask with vexed Pilate ;
If from Heaven, then why should it fling
Dark shadows around and before it ?
Why bring hatred and war in its train ?

Bismarck and the Pope both adore it—
Here's solace for pain.

VI.

Whereas in wine, mirth, wit, and laughter
There is something we know and can feel ;
Soft rose-leaves to rest on hereafter,
When the fountains of springtime congeal :
Sweet relief, when from tropical travel
Retired and pensioned, you fain,
Amid twinges of gout or of gravel,
Would have solace for pain.

VII.

Eyes emblazoned with wine on the valley
'Neath Richmond's fair hill we will rest :
Alhambra ! at night let thy ballet,
To the music of beauty undrest,
Teach how sordid the arts that bedrape us,
While the "nude and antique" yet remain ;
Press out from the loves of Priapus
Sweet solace for pain !

VIII.

Great Nature ! the souls that are guided
By thee nourish reason and light :

We can judge of thy truth many-sided,
For thou shovest thyself to our sight :
We behold thee in sunlight and shadow,
In moons that wax brightly and wane,
Mountain girdled by storm, and green meadow—
True solace for pain !

IX.

Yet there are who thy wild thrills would
smother,
Fools who trample red blossom in dust—
Confound them, Astarte, O mother !
O sweet inspiration of Lust !
From the cave where the white breaker tumbles
Arise, and give Passion the rein !
Go to—says the preacher, but mumbles
No solace for pain.

X.

We have chanced on new days ; yea, the jewel
Of knowledge illuminates our brows :
Away with the cold creeds, the cruel
Hard bonds of impossible vows !
Life is short ; while the corn glitters golden
Whet the sickle, reap, garner the grain !
Yea, the new days we love, for the olden
Give no solace for pain.

XI.

I say not the code of the Stoic
Holds nought for a man to admire ;
I deny not that Paul was heroic,
And the life of the Christ even higher ;
But these old-world beliefs brand offences,
Ennoble, make pure, yet restrain :
Vive la joie ! let the play of the senses
Be solace for pain.



A SONG OF SOUND.

I.

SUMMER enfolding the valley and town !
Golden-haired Autumn in russet and brown !

While Spring, with its springtide rare,
Shrinks and is coy as a bird on the wing ;
As a maiden is shy, so shy is the Spring ;
Ah, love, with the rippling hair !

II.

Is there aught in the song of the swallow that
saddens,
Brow-bathed in the dew of a sunrise that gladdens ?
Is youth but a fret and a care ?
Wilt thou fling from thee idly as foam from the
ocean,
As yesterday's roses, thy lover's devotion ?
Ah, love, with the rippling hair !

III.

Didst thou drink to the lees of the winepress ? Thou
gavest
Sweet guerdon of smiles to the hearts thou enslavest ;
That tempest of sighs in the air—

Wilt thou answer it, sweet one, after thy fashion,
 With the crimson of hate and the purple of passion ?
 Ah, love, with the rippling hair !

IV.

Wind-swept, is there peace in the isles of Desire ?
 Storm-tost, is there rest in thy love and its fire,
 The snowdrift of hope or despair ?
 Hadst thou Midnight to mother—half goddess half
 mortal—
 Star-crowned, dost thou heed when song strikes at
 thy portal ?
 Ah, love, with the rippling hair !

V.

Needs must that I sing, needs must I adore thee.
 Where art thou, what art thou ? O love, I implore
 thee,
 Impossible picture, declare
 Is there more than one poet who lauds or bewails
 thee ?
 Is it opium, or absinthe, or Bedlam unveils thee ?
 Ah, love, with the rippling hair !



THE YOUNG SUBALTERN TO HIS IDEAL
LOVE.

I.

IN my dream of yesternight,
 You were there with your gleaming hair ;
Surpassing yourself in the light
 Of a beauty bewitchingly fair.
You are always beautiful, dear,
 But last night more than ever you shone,
With a radiance so bright that its peer
 I never have looked upon.

II.

You moved in a luminous haze
 Self-streamed, O my queen ! and I stood
Spell-bound, with a passionate gaze,
 A rebel at heart—for my blood
Surged strong with a mutinous tide,
 As I knelt your fair hand, love, to kiss.
Then looked on your lips, love, and sighed
 “ O to taste of their exquisite bliss ! ”

III.

On a sudden there flashed in the air
 A magical moment—and then
 You were there in your ball dress, my fair,
 Surrounded by glances of men :
 And I felt as I marked every glance
 In my breast something grow cold and hard ;
 But 'twas gone when by fortunate chance
 You dropped, and I picked up, your card.

IV.

For we both stooped at once, and somehow
 Touched fingers—'twas my fault, I own ;
 Nay—more, love ! your hair touched my brow ;
 And I whispered, and caught the low tone
 That reproached me for wearing a gloom—
 “I care, sir, to waltz but with you.”
 And then, ah, my darling ! the room
 Seemed to hold no one else but us two.

V.

And next, when the dancing gave way,
 As a rest from so pleasant a labour,
 I remember we sat down to play
 A game at ‘ Beggar my Neighbour.’
 Of the cards I scarce knew which was which,
 But although in a very short while
 You ‘ beggared ’ me quite, I was rich
 In the wealth of your beautiful smile.

VI.

I was rich in that wealth, and o'erjoyed
At the Present I recked not a care
Of the Future, so dark and so void,
Of Fortune, so scant and so bare :
'Love wins,' said a murmur that broke,
Proclaiming glad conquest of Beauty—
'Twas 'GUN-FIRE,' dearest ! I woke
To know that I was '*on duty*.'



SOME PERSONS.

WE all dislike the coarse and rough—
 But there are persons who
 Are estimable folk enough,
 Yet not like me or you.

They pay their way and go to church,
 In Sunday-schools have taught,
 And never leave you in the lurch—
 Because they promise nought.

They never swear or tell a chap
 To go—let's say, to blazes ;
 They keep their tempers, and on tap
 A stock of proper phrases.

Good citizens they make, no doubt,
 Good fathers, mothers—very :
 But somehow where they move about
 The fun is mild, not merry.

If jokes are told them good or bad—
 You know there is no harm in't,
 And yet you feel as if you had
 Just donned your Sunday garment.

As if the parson looked you through,
While shy, with creaking feet,
Preceded by a verger, you
Were being shown a seat.

It is not that these worthy folk
At merriment are riled ;
It's simply they can't twig a joke,
Or understand a child.

They always seem to be in school,
And long for no vacation ;
They measure by a two-foot rule
What Yankees call 'creation.'

They lack the genial fire that gleams
Where simple nature plays ;
Their mental moral being seems
To be encased in *stays*.

They oftener give than take advice,
And take than give a present ;
They may be sometimes 'rather nice,'
But never 'very pleasant.'

They're civil, well-dressed, well-informed,
And sometimes give good dinners ;
By lawless passion seldom stormed,
As are Bohemia's sinners.

And yet, with morals beyond praise,
I only know they bore you—
By showing in ten thousand ways
They don't care twopence for you.



—'S IMPROMPTUS.

I WAS thinking—yes, this morning—as I sauntered
through my stables,

Of my colloquy with Brown and that argument with
Smith—

When it flashed across me sudden how I might have
turned the tables

By a brilliant quotation and repartee, the pith
Of which I know in Latin expressed—but I refrain
From further explanation for a reason that is plain :
I reserve it for explosion on some future social
night,

And, to tell the truth, at present it has escaped me
quite.

'Tis the fate of my Impromptus ; they occur to me
at seasons .

When I commune with the night breeze or apostro-
phize a star :

When I wake up in the morning, for certain curious
reasons

They have travelled like the fairies so very fast and
far,

That to call them back to duty with a sudden jerk
and strain

Would be surely very cruel, if not altogether vain.

So I let them fly till weary they descend—a little
flat—

Then I book them, those Impromptus, and rehearse
them fresh and pat.



A SECRET WOE.

THERE is a secret source of woe
 Where palm trees wave and tropic suns
 Make men and women burn and glow,
 Like hot cross buns—
 (By which I mean grow cross and hot)—
 A woe embittering many a lot ;
 The cause of untold grief and folly,
 Of much deep-seated melancholy :
 Ah ! would'st thou hear it ? Stranger, stay,
 And list my 'unpremeditated' lay !

Most in the lands of cypress and of myrtle,
 Amid the swarthy skinned, it lurks unseen ;
 Yet in our Isle at feasts of punch and turtle
 It comes between.
 Where comes it not ? It breaks true lovers' chains,
 Increases Jealousy's consuming pains ;
 Handmaid of Hate, and dear to Discontent—
 Would'st thou escape it ? Seek the Arab's tent ;
 Try dates for food, throw off each worldly trammel,
 And roam the desert on a Bedouin camel.

Yet even in Central Afric Burnaby
Records the presence of thischief of ills :
Among the gifts most prized there—says not he ?
Are COCKLE'S PILLS.
Stranger, you know it now ; that mystic word
Unveils it to the vulgar ; all have heard
Of Cockle ; consequently all must know
This mournful blight, this secret source of woe.
No ? then attend, and pr'ythee do not smile—
The subject saddens—briefly told, 'tis *bile*.

The 'Faculty' give way, e'en supercilious
Physicians own these pills are antibilious.



A CRUEL BLOW.

I.

THE trace of pain was on her brow,
 Her nerves were tightly stretched ; and I
 Could only gaze and wonder how
 And why that pain :
 I questioned her, but sought reply
 In vain.

II.

She was not mine ; another held
 That pearl of pearls, that rosebud fair.
 Was he the cause the soft heart swelled,
 Tears dimmed those eyes ?
 The thought (to me 'twas mad despair)
 Would rise.

III.

And inwardly I murmured, 'Brute,'
 While outwardly I said, 'How few
 Kind husbands are there !' She was mute :
 The sage remark
 Had evidently missed, tho' true,
 Its mark.

IV.

I next essayed to glance at tricks
 Of gossip, thinking some kind friend
 Had dropped the thorn ; but failed to fix
 It so ; I tried
 A dozen ways, and at the end
 I sighed :

V.

Took up a book : a pause ; and then
 Her lips unclosed—and bit by bit
 I wormed the secret which my pen
 Scarce dare reveal ;
 I found the dart that pierced and hit
 Like steel.

VI.

But yester evening she had dined
 At Government House : an A. D. C.
 Had robbed her of her peace of mind.
 An old adorer,
 One Colonel K., took Mrs. G.
 Before her ;

VII.

While Mr. Grantley took her in—
 A young civilian—now you see !
 It was not that she cared a pin,
 Or loved old staggers ;
 But G.'s a *Captain's* wife—and she
 A MAJOR'S.

THE FIRST FURLOUGH.

BY AN OLD INDIAN.

I.

YOU came out a boy, you're returning
 A man, with a beard full-grown,
 And fancies all buzzing and burning
 Round the scenes your boyhood has known.
 'Tis a grand time indeed ; but remember,
 You have changed, and Time nowhere stands
 still ;
 While in England May glides to December,
 In more ways than one, with a will.

II.

Boys and girls—nay, each infantine lisper—
 You knew, will be grown up and slow :
 They'll vote you delightful, and whisper
 ' Too much of the Indian, you know.'
 You'll admire the hale British matron,
 The girls all so wondrously fair ;
 But you'll turn to St. James for your patron,
 At the Club, 14 in his Square.

III.

Many things for which you have hankered
 You will find a delusion, a snare :
 The virtue that lies in a tankard,
 Roast beef and the old English fare,
 Remains, but the strawberries taste not
 As of yore ; old pleasures take wing :
 And 'Want not' is better than 'Waste not'
 In the land where money is king.

IV.

'*Nunc est*,' do you murmur, '*bibendum*' ?
 Now's the time for a spree—there are pounds
 Awaiting your advent to spend 'em ?
 Bravo ! only keep within bounds,
 And your coin will bring pleasure, transmuting
 All boredom in country or town ;
 You can buy your own fishing and shooting,
 And mammas will be hunting you down.

V.

What ! hunting as well in the winter ?
 By Jove ! you will do it ; but mind,
 If you mean to launch out without stint or
 Reserve, leave a balance behind.
 The Indian has need of a margin,
 He bleeds at each pore, while his friends
 His income are always enlarging ;
 He brags too himself as he spends.

VI.

He forgets the rude garments he wore at
Jungleybad but a few months ago :
The barn that he lived in and swore at
Fades away as he flirts in the Row.
Not a word does he drop of how bare is
The life he has left ; he essays
To pass for a swell, catch an heiress,
And in purple and plush end his days.

VII.

A libel, you say ! Well, it may be ;
It's not quite the line that *I* took.
Was too much, perhaps, of a gaby,
Or funk'd being brought, sir, to book.
I growled, but enjoyed myself greatly
In a quiet unrackety way ;
Took my drinking and wooing sedately,
And lived upon—three times my pay.

VIII.

It's a nice little place, sir, that island—
Tho' the rooms are too close and confined ;
For some things there's no spot on dry land
It's equal, or more to my mind.
But it's cold to the stranger ; its purses
And windows don't open like ours ;
It stifles and starves, has reverses
Of climate and luck at all hours.

IX.

There are plenty of sweets worth the sipping,
There are blasts most confoundedly keen :
The young folk want constantly 'tipping,'
The old folks regard you 'eighteen.'
You'll indulge in no end of romances
On tigers and snakes, and be paid
By-and-by with incredulous glances
And smiles at the 'tricks of your trade.'

X.

Yet withal the first furlough means clover
To the man who left England a boy.
Shall I wish you, my friend, ere 'tis over,
The last crowning sorrow, or joy ?
Pain and care to be sweetly divided
(Or doubled—which is it ?) for life ?
I'm a cynic ? Well, don't do as I did—
Come back without money or wife.



HORACE—ANGLICIZED AND INDIANIZED.

Note.—The idea of transmogrifying Horace into an Anglo-Indian, as is done in some of these specimens, was suggested to me some years ago by a friend, who illustrated it with a skill that more than excused its audacity. To lovers of the genuine Falernian my mixture will be as claret-cup often is to the wine from which it takes its name. I will only plead that there are people who don't drink good wine, don't know what it is, and yet rather like a mild beverage. Also, that there is no deception in this decoction; the curacao is undisguised, the parody patent—in parts, I think, even to those who know no more of Horace than that he was a Roman poet, and is, or used to be, a good deal quoted in the British House of Commons and lesser places of debate. Having confessed thus much, I must add that there *is* claret in the cup: indeed, the first of these odes aspires to be a translation, done in schoolboy days; and this may almost be said of the second and third.

LOVERS' QUARRELS.

BOOK III., ODE 9.

HORACE. While to thee I was sweetheart,
 When no other was found
 More potent in charms,
 To throw loving arms
 Thy white neck around,
 Than the king of the Persians more blessed
 was I.

LYDIA. While you burned for no other,
And great was my name ;
When Lydia was reckoned
To Chloë not second,
In maidenly fame,
Than Ilia of Rome more renownèd was I.

HORACE. Me Chloë's now queen of ;
The girl of sweet strains,
In my bosom she reigns ;
For whose sake I swear
To die I'd not fear—
So the Fates to survive me would spare
my sweet dear.

LYDIA. Me Calais is lord of ;
The love-flames that shine
In his breast glow in mine ;
For whom with love sure
Death *twice* I'd endure—
So the Fates to survive me would spare
my sweet *puer*.

HORACE. What, if former love come back,
And bind with strong chain
Hearts disjoinèd again ?
If to Chloë with hair of gold
This heart again be cold,
And to Lydia rejected its portals unfold ?

LYDIA. Then, though my Calais is
Star of eve brighter than ;
Though thou art lighter than
Down, and thy temper be
Hotter than raging sea—
Yet will I live and die gladly with thee !



THE GOLDEN MEAN.

BOOK II., ODE 10.

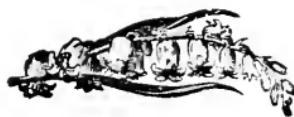
LAUNCH out into the open main,
Or blindly hug the shore?
Waste in a year a lifetime's gain,
Or keep a miser's store?
Do neither; but with aim serene
Preserve, my friend, the golden mean.

So, free from sordid solitude,
You shall not vaunt a full-blown state;
Nor nurse the common envious mood
That carps at every palace gate.
The lofty pines, when winds assail,
Feel most the fury of the gale.

High towers fall heaviest in the squall,
(A great man's lot is often hard,)
And when the angry lightnings fall,
The mountain-tops are ever scarred.
You see my drift? wise men, I say,
Fear most when sunned by Fortune's ray.

And adverse times freeze not their hopes,
For well they know the selfsame Power
That binds with frost the grassy slopes
Will bring again the summer flower.
If now you feel the wintry blast,
Think this—the hard times will not last.

Though silent now, who knows but what
A note of joy he soon may sing ?
Shall Fate for ever wound, and not
At times, my friend, lay by her sling ?
When Fortune lours, show heart and pluck,
But shorten sail when winds blow luck.



TO THE OLD “FLAME.”

BOOK I., ODE 5.

WHAT slip of youth is wooing thee,
 Bedewed in rose perfumery,
 In ball-room's cool recess ?
 Sacred that hair to whom—
 Wanton in golden bloom,
 Siren of artlessness ?
 Ah ! he who woos thee fondly now
 Shall often mourn thy broken vow,
 With tearful eye a-grieving ;
 Gazing on stormy sea,
 Wailing the Fates' decree—
 Fool for believing !

Fool, not to know the fickle breeze,
 But ever think to love and please ;
 Ah ! Helen, thy soft witcherries
 Beguile the young untried :
 I who fell in Love's sea
 Swam out full speedily ;
 Now as dry as any bone,
 With a wife of fourteen stone,

And a fortune of her own,
Bid I my neighbours see
How of Helen's witchery
'Scaped I the tide.



TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

BOOK I., ODE 9.

I.

I PICTURE you burning your yule-log in Wales ;
 Mount Snowdon stands by, clad in thickly wreathed
 snow,
 And the snowdrifts are heavy on woods and in dales,
 While the frost is so hard the rivers won't flow.

II.

Well, keep out the cold ; pile the logs up on high ;
 Produce the old port, and be jovial to-night :
 Leave the rest to the gods, who, when tempests
 sweep by,
 And war with the sea till he boils in his might,

III.

Lull them softly to rest, so that cypress and ash
 Stir never a leaf : why, then I maintain
 You need not inquire what to-morrow may flash,
 But score up each day as it comes for a gain.

IV.

While you're young, sir, and blooming, make the most
of your time ;
 Eat, drink, and be seen every night on the Mall.
Play blindman's-buff with the girls ; their laughter's
 sweet chime
Is delightful—mistletoe shrieks above all ;

V.

When you pounce on them suddenly under the bough,
 And snatch in the struggle a glove or a kiss ;
They pretend you shan't have it, but really allow
 The pleasant effrontery's not much amiss.



TO NORA.

BOOK I., ODE 8.

TELL me, Nora, pray,

Why have your bright eyes made Jack such a muff :

He used to be a manly chap enough,

And game to hunt a pig, however hot the day.

But now we see him stand

Moonstruck, and shrinking from a Mess carouse ;

Not ' peacocking ' from house to house,

Or on his Arab prancing at the Band.

And one would think the lad

Had never handled quoit, or ball and bat ;

He keeps his hands so clear of mutton fat,

You'd think no soap and water could be had.

If you propose to throw him

At wrestling—why, he backs out with excuses ;

The man who used to pride himself on bruises

Now seems to think the slightest knock would kill
him.

His liver's sound, the fellow's tough enough ;

But, Nora, you have made Jack *such* a muff !

TO DISMAL JAMES.

BOOK II., ODE II.

SCRAPING and toiling, your face
 Is enough to drive a man frantic.
 Why look forward so much? Why try
 To compress the whole world in a sigh,
 And span with your fears the Atlantic?

You allow, John, that life is a race
 Soon run: well, then, little's required.
 Youth and beauty pass quickly away,
 Age eclipses love's pleasant heyday,
 And makes us sleep poorly when tired.

We must change, then, it seems, like the flowers
 Of spring, or the light of the moon.
 'Tis *kismet*; but wherefore revolve
 Deep problems you never can solve?
 And why pipe to so doleful a tune?

While here, let us press from the hours
 All their joys—you call them, John, folly.
 Though India's not England, you see,
 My friend, an old buffer like me
 Thrives tolerably well and is jolly.

It's the 'sparkling' that does it : come on,
Have a glass, you old Puritan—drink !
Then we'll off to the ball-room, and you
Shall dance with that fairy in blue,
While I take the angel in pink.



TO A WOULD-BE MOTHER-IN-LAW.

BOOK IV., ODE I.

✗ MOTHER-IN-LAW that wouldest be, spare me a bachelor,
spare me !

I am not what I was, to fetch and carry for ladies.
Love is it you would instil in an old cock close upon
fifty ?

Go, there are boys who will pray you to mother-in-law
them for ever ;

Go with daughters twain, and conquer a youthful Col-
lector.

Robinson—he is the man, inflammable, sportive, and
handsome,

Fond of returning thanks to the oft-drank toast of
“The Ladies.”

He can dance, sing, paint, and loves to play the piano.

Let him come to the front, and soon will rise up a
rival.

Robinson rivals brings, who'll bring you many a pre-
sent ;

Then he will laugh and win, and—find you a home at
Geneva ;

Close to the bright blue lake, or a cottage Swiss in
the Tyrol.

There you shall have fresh air and sounds of the
hurdy-gurdy,
Incense-breathing pines, and the music of Tyrolean
maidens.

Lads and lasses will dance, if you pay them, morning
and evening,
Dance, and be glad of the coin, to the mother-in-law
from Mussooree.

Me tho' woman nor youth, nor the hope of an ardent
attachment,

Suppers at night (or rather at one o'clock in the morn-
ing),

Button-hole posies, or gloves, or boots of the shiniest
leather,

Please as of old: ah, no! but at times I sigh in my
armchair,

Sometimes silence will hold my tongue, which is
otherwise fluent.

Nightly in dreams I clasp—ah, what? 'Tis a phan-
tom, a shadow,

Flying across Hyde Park, cold shade of one who was
cruel.

Years are between, long years, and the breadth of the
measureless ocean.



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